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Its All About Hope

U Mohnish Kumar

The year 2020 has been tough on all of us. Everyone's life took a big turn during the last nine months. The pandemic brought about a significant change in everyone's life, especially those who depend on daily wages for their bread and butter.

The shopkeepers in the local markets faced many hardships since nine months. Their struggle started when the government announced the first lockdown; panic ensued. People rushed out of their houses to stock in supplies. The only thing followed was an ignorance for safety. These actions affected not only the crowd but also the shopkeeper's safety. All the shops in the market had to be closed during the lockdown. This brought about a massive loss for people whose livelihood depended on day-to-day sales.

Most of the shops in the market buy vegetables and fruits that need to be sold within a fixed period or become inedible. They faced huge monetary losses. Some of them even had to starve as they didn't have a secondary source of income.

Some of them said that they faced much trouble to get ad-

ditional stock for their shops even though their shops were allowed to be open for a particular time during the day, they were not able to supply effectively to their customers.

Even after the lockdown rules were relaxed, the sales were not back to the way it was. Though they follow all safety protocols, people are still hesitant to come to the market and buy from them.

Since they did not have the required sales to break even, many of them even had to let go off many employees. "We have our regular customers who buy from us. Though we maintain all the safety protocols accurately, many of them still worried about hygiene because our store is situated in the middle of the market. When customers come to us during festivals, there is a lot of demand, which sometimes we cannot meet due to travel and delivery restrictions. We do not receive our goods on time to distribute". Said a departmental store owner in the place.

Even though Corona stagnated everything, they are trying to come back to their normal life. Even if they starved, they are optimistic. They are still hopeful that everything will be back to normal. Hopefully, 2021 will bring them back to normal life.

Unemployment – an Economic Issue

Gopika Raj

Unemployment, the major concern, which is becoming the biggest barrier in the development of our country, needs strict and proper attention from all sectors of India including government or nongovernment organizations. Unemployment has been a major problem in India for many years and affected many people physically and mentally. Most of the young age people, who have a professional degree, have to struggle for a good and suitable job for themselves due to an underdeveloped and inefficient education system and lack of vacancies in relevant sectors of major



Infographics Credit: Internet

companies in India. In India, the problem of unemployment has been rapidly increasing in recent past years due to the increased population and the major downfall in many business sectors. Recession in many business companies led the problem of unemployment

and also affects many of the families who depends on the monthly income getting from that company. Some of the better solutions for unemployment will be giving better education, subsidies for company how are reintegrating unemployed persons. Whenever there

is a financial crisis situation to give a fiscal and monetary measures in a financial in a financial crisis situation. We can also reduce unemployment by creating more job opportunities, it helps people to get into more job opportunities and avoid unemployment.

Gender Inequalities: Past Issues and Future Possibilities

Swetha K

Women have always been victims of violence and exploitation within India. This violence consists of criminal, domestic and social violence. Rape, murder, dowry deaths, sexual violence, eve-teasing all these are the present common issues against women. The number of reported rape cases are increasing day by day.

Most of these instances, the rapist is known to the victim. Moreover, the statistics fail to reveal the high number of cases that are

not even reported by the victim or by the authority.

Right from the later Vedic age to post-modern age Indian women never have experienced the freedom that men have. They are always subjected to inequality. Patriarchal ideologies coupled with the subordinate status of women is the major cause of domestic violence. In light of the increasing instances of violence against women, the government needs to take stringent measures to reduce the degree of

violence against women. The Indian constitution does not recognize marital rape as a criminal offence. The pattern needs such as ending victim-blaming for sexual and violent assaults.

Prevention is better than cure. Because this is the only way to stop before it even occurs. It requires political commitment, investing in women's organization, implementing laws that promote gender equality and addressing the discrimination women face daily. Also now the victims are beginning to



break the silence by seeking legislative protection. This would also create a great impact on society.

Let the world consider that she is no more dependent, weak, and subordinate then only she can rise above the heights. Let her dream flies beyond regional, social, cultural and economic boundaries. Let the world be free without hashtags.

OTT: The Rescue From Boredom

U Mohnish Kumar

We all had a tough time during the lockdown. Although it was fun for all the introverts, it was a Herculean task for people who love to travel and enjoy. But there was a silver lining. Being cooped up inside our homes each day, with nothing much to do, made us look into various ways to entertain ourselves. Some chose reading, while others tapped into the gaming world. But the one type of entertainment that stood out in all of these was OTT platforms.

OTT, or over-the-top platforms, are audio and video hosting and streaming services which started out as content hosting platforms, but soon branched out into the production and release of short movies, feature films, documentaries and web-series themselves.

OTT platforms do not need websites or television to access, but a simple mobile phone app can do the wonder. This little innovation was a game-changer. These days, everyone has a smartphone to access any OTT site with their relevant apps, such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, HotStar and many more. It provided unlimited access to a wide range of shows, tv-series and movies, both regional and international.

It has provided a lot of recognition for Indian film makers and actors on an inter-

national scale. Artists who were struggling to bring out their talent to a larger audience were given much attention in the OTT platforms. Because of the reach and popularity the OTT's have, even Indian web series like Delhi Crime were nominated and also awarded an Emmy. Since the OTT's never had restrictions on the type of content or genres it provides a lot of freedom for the creators and also a wider choice for the audience.

It also breaks the language barriers that exist in the world of cinema, helps to bring different cultures together by giving audio translations and subtitles in various languages. Series like Money Heist which was known only in Spain, is now popular all over the globe, thanks to Netflix for providing language translation.

Though OTT platforms like Netflix and Amazon Prime were prominent at the beginning of 2020, there were still not many users in India. The lockdown brought about a huge change in the market and demand for OTT services.

The announcement of the telecom regulatory authority of India (TRAI) about the implementation of NTO 2.0, which states that the cable tv expenses will rise to 58 percent more for premium channels like Sony, Zee, Starplus and more, was another reason for the rise in popularity for OTT platforms in India.

Discovering the Roots of Hindutva

Lakshmi Muralidaran

India is an ancient civilization, but as a modern "nation state", it is very young, having taken birth in 1947 when British India was divided into India and Pakistan. With Indians getting educated with wide exposure and experiences brings in concepts such as all citizens are equal despite their religion, language or caste. This led to a new India that we know today but doesn't believe in respecting each other's religion.

How did India become the capital of Hindutva?

Hindu originally had a geographical connotation - from the Persian perspective - to denote "the land beyond the Sindhu"; the term wasn't coined to denote any religious meaning. The suffix "stan" - indicative of a geographical place - was added to form "Hindustan". The word Hindu doesn't appear in the 4 Vedas, the Upanishads

and the Buddhist scriptures. The various traditions used their philosophical and spiritual practices such as Vaishnavs, Shakta, Mahayana, Vajrayana, Advaita etc - to identify themselves. But no one called themselves Hindus.

All the three words: Hindus, Hindustan and Hinduism had no connection with ancient India, prior to 12th century. They began to get accepted gradually after 16th century by a larger population. In the essay Hindutva: Who is a Hindu? Savarkar himself wrote, "Hindutva is not identical with what is vaguely indicated by the term Hinduism." His aim was the political mobilisation of all those with "Hindu" identity to form a nation of militant nationalists.

Society in India had become rigid overtime. The philosophy says that Indians are Brahmins, but in day-to-day terms we see each other in unequal terms. Our life today

has a lot to do with our achievements, good and bad in past lives. One is claimed as poor or rich due to the evil in the past, they must pay for. There is no forgiveness in this tradition.

One's birth determines one's occupation and position in the society. The jati structure - the structure of occupations in a society, serves to transfer skills from one generation to another. Today, politicians turn this into "vote banks" in various ways. Other jatis have other duties and there are hundreds of them. Populations grew, invaders came and went, migrations took place, but the rigid caste system remains unchanged. As time passes by the great tradition leads to a society in which some are fortunate, many unfortunate. This inequality is not the doing of those who are not well off. They are not exploiters; those who are suffering are because of their own past. Each jati has their

own past. If performed one, gains merit. The caste that is born to perform and enforce these rules is the brahmins. Others have their duties as soldiers, traders, farmers and so on. The Brahmin has to perform his own rituals to live up to his traditional obligations; in addition he must provide services to all those of other jatis who need them. He cannot trade and become rich and a trader cannot aspire to perform the sacred rituals. Each has a place and must maintain it. Villages and regions then developed over time a set of traditional duties and reciprocal obligations, called the jajmani system. This is the local little tradition. Differences in the little tradition, became differences among people and often divided them, Unity in Diversity. This is an eternal Brahminical order, by its nature and unchanging one. Curiosity, experimentation, challenging the given and the like have no place in this tradition.

Farmers Showdown: Ready to Die

Sakshi Amani

In 27 September 2020, India's President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent to the three controversial 'Farm Bills 2020' that were earlier passed by the Indian Parliament. The lok sabha approved the bill on 17 September 2020 and the Rajya sabha approved on 20 September 2020. The three farm laws have been projected by the government as major reforms in the agriculture sector that will remove middlemen and allow farmers to sell anywhere in the country. Until 2020, the first sale of agriculture produce could occur only at the

mandis of the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC). The massive numbers of protest takes in different parts of Indian states such as Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, UP. Farmers fear that this may be an excuse to pull off the MSP safety net from under their feet.

This bill leads the farmer to fear that the money-lender or industries will use to bind them with contract to earn more profits.

The farmers also raised a slogan "Kisan bachao mandi bachavo". The BJP back street Shiromani Akali Dal have termed these reforms as 'anti-farmer'. The govern-



Photo Credit : Internet

ment tries to justify that these laws will transform Indian agriculture and attract private investment. This bill was reform the way in which agriculture goods are produced and marketed. These bills allow farmers to sell produce directly to corporates, argues the Centre. The bill says about the

Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020: This bill gives freedom to farmers to sell their produce outside the APMC market yards (mandis). It will open more choices for farmers, reduce marketing costs, and help them get better prices.

India launched the National Mental Health Rehabilitation helpline

Lakshmi Muralidaran

On 27 August 2020, the Central government launched "KIRAN"- a mental rehabilitation helpline number, which provides early screening, first-aid, psychological support, distress management, mental well-being and psychological crisis management. The helpline is managed by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPWD).

The initiative was a result of an online petition filed by Raashi Thakran, an engineering graduate to Dr Harsh Vardhan, Ministry of Health and Family Affairs after the sudden suicide of her 18-year-old brother Raghav in January. Her petition de-

manded a national helpline number to prevent suicides.

"I called 15 helpline numbers that I found on the internet, and only three calls were answered," said Raashi in the quest for the reason of her little brother's death. She wanted to know why he didn't reach out and get any reliable help online. Her revelation was depressing. It drove Raashi to file a petition about mental health concerns and the need for a national support system.

As per the World Health Organization (WHO), mental illness accounts for 15% of the total medical conditions worldwide. India is ranked among the world's most depressed countries. Statistics show that one in seven



Photo Credit : Internet

Indians suffer from poor mental health. Although Raashi sees the launch of KIRAN as a success, she says that it is just "a drop in the sea". To make sure KIRAN does not go null, the government has to undergo regular audits and provide quality intervention to all.

"We as a society needs to change, simply talking about suicide and mental health is not enough; our condition-

ing needs to change. We need to stop giving our definitions for the word normal and stop trying to fit people in these boxes. A few years ago, talking about HIV was a taboo, and hence there were many stigmas around AIDS. But as time flew, we educated ourselves and came out the unnecessary taboos associated with it. It should be the same with mental health," says Raashi.

When Music Unfolds Love

Swetha K

Long years ago, a girl vocalist admires a boy when he tuned his violin with her pitch. They married each other. They have two sons, Vishnu and Vignesh, they also musicians. Both are experts in their passion since childhood. They have participated in national competitions representing India.

Their story starts at Palakkad Music college. Satheesan and Bindu met in college for the first time. Satheesan was a Violin student, Bindu was in Classical Music. Both of them were supposed to study the other as part of their complimentary paper. Satheesan came from a poor background. He lost his father at an early age so, he had to take care of his entire family. Bindhu was from a noble music family. She was a good friend and a support system during

his difficult times. Later, that friendship turned into a relationship. They got married without the blessings from their families. Music was the only thing that they had when they started their life. They moved their life with music. During those incomplete days, Bindhu used to sing her favourite 'Sree raga', Satheesan accompanied her with the violin.

The sons were born in a rented house. Vishnu followed his father's path. He started his journey art his early stage and soon after he got rewarded the first prize in Kerala State Youth Festival. These achievements even continued in the level of Dzone, Interzone and South zone.

Now he is working in an NGO and continuing his passion by doing music concerts. Vignesh is more into Mridangam. Like his brother, he also won the first prize in Ker-



Photo Credit : Rekha K T

ala State Youth Festival. Now they are leading a happy life with two more new members, Aswathi, wife of Vishnu and their son Anantha Krishnan.

"Music was the food when we were nothing if we have something today that is only because of music", said Satheesan, tears streamed down from Bindhu's face. Now the family is renowned for music all over the state; they teach violin, classical music, mridangam and veena. More than

1000 disciples learn from them. Many students attend online classes from other countries. Now they are celebrating the 30th anniversary of their institution called 'Sopanam'. During free time, Bindhu sings her favourite Sree Raga from the kitchen, Satheesan and Vishnu accompany her with violin, Vignesh also follows them with Mridangam, then the Soapanam shares the unstoppable love with music.

Electronic Devices Demand Spiked During Lockdown

Gopika Raj

The use of electronic device has increased more due to the pandemic, especially for kids. Students couldn't afford a mobile device and an internet connection face a huge problem. In a situation likethis people all over the world are coming forward and helping poor students by providing themlaptops and smart phones for studies. There are many organization who are even doing the same. Small towns are more affected by this, because the people merely earn their daily bread and day today life. Due to lack of electronic devices and equipments students are facing difficulty to attend theonline classes. So, at these places there are people who make collective decision to provide themwith the needs.

Shoorand, a village in Kollam district in Kerala is a small town were kids are facing problems to attend online classes because they don't have devices for the class. At this point the village Panchayat member Mr. Gireesh Kumar Vijayan-nair came forward with an initiative to provide smart phones and laptops for the poor kids through the gram panchayt organization. He has helped a lot of people for building house, helping in the development of small shops etc. At the government school of Shoor-nad a program was conducted organized by the "SANGAMAM" organization panchayat. People came down together to provide kids with smart phones, laptops, and even money. All the kids along with their families were very happy because from now on they can study without any interruptions.

Garbage Issue Troubles Nikseng Gittim Residents

Cassandra Meokee

Since January 2021, garbage in Nikseng Gittim locality has not been collected due to lack of garbage trucks, leaving residents with complaints.

Garbage disposal continues to be a continual problem in the town. In Nikseng Gittim, garbage trucks have stopped coming daily, which basically means collection of trash along roadside. Sheetal Marak, a resident of the area, said the situation has worsen compared to what it was a month ago, garbage trucks are not coming daily.

The garbage affairs incited locality's mayor S.D Sangma to



Photo Credit : Cassandra

call for a meeting on 18th of January to come up with a plan to keep the area clean, especially during the New Year week. "The area is reeking of garbage stench", complained one concerned resident of Nikseng Gittim.

The in charge of Tura Municipality Board made an arrangement to make sure the garbage truck arrives daily henceforth.

Kerala Kalamandalam: Nine Decade Old Tribute to Art

Swetha K

The temple of performing arts Kerala Kalamandalam turns 90. When this was established in the 1930s by the great poet Vallathol Narayana Menon; had a vision - preserve all art forms and culture of Kerala. Kerala Kalamandalam has been producing many students who follow their guru's path for 90 years. This upholds the cultural heritage of Kerala.

Kerala Kalamandalam, located in Cheruthuruthi, on the banks of Nila (Bharathapuzha) in Thrissur district. Thrissur is also known as the cultural city in Kerala. Their motto says that "designed for the traditional way of education imbibing the enlightenment of new age".

In 2006 Kerala Kalamandalam was accorded the credit of deemed to be the university of Art and Culture by the Government of India. During 1927, Vallathol Narayana Menon and his



Photo Credit : Internet

friend Mukunda Raja put this idea and came forward to make this dream a reality. In 1930, the dream came true with the help of many people. Earlier Kalamandalam was limited only to Mohiniyattam and Kathakali arts forms. Later started to impart training in Thullal, Chenda, Classical Music, Kathakali Sangeetham, Chutti, Mizhavu, Madhalam and many others. Kalamandalam has been following the Gurukula system since its beginning. That is Shishya (disciples) live near or with the guru till course over. Koothambalam is the prominent area in Kalamandalam and constructed as per the guide-

lines of "Natyasastra" of Bharatha Muni. Artists believe that koothambalam is a sacred place to worship their art form. Usually, Arangettam, cultural programs and art forms are conducted in Koothambalam. Students practice and study from "Kalari"; which is equal to a normal classroom. Each art form has its own "Kalari".

Students can take admission from 8th standard with a respective art form after the compulsory examination and interview. Here they offer 12 undergraduate courses apart from other higher studies. After the successful completion of the 8-year course, the students can

add Kalamandalam to their name. Also, they can continue their higher education from Nila campus. Kalamandalam gives equal weightage to both arts and academics. A school is also located on the campus.

Now Kalamandalam reaches its "navathi", that is completing 90 golden years. But all the celebrations had to be postponed due to the pandemic. Kalamandalam touches the heights and stands beyond the barriers of religion, language and even geographical boundaries. Many foreigners have been taking admission and study various art forms.

The institution has produced many legends in every art form. Kalamandalam Gopi is the living legend of Kathakali, Kalamandalam Kshemavathi, Kalamandalam Kalyanikutty Amma, Kalamandalam Geethanandhan and the list continuing. Kerala Kalamandalam has a great influence on the upbringing of art and culture in Kerala.

How Fashion Rules the World

Gopika Raj



Photo Credit : Internet

Fashion is a term which means 'an ongoing trend'. It refers to how people dress and what kind of external getup most people think is making them look stylish, up-to-date and sophisticated. It changes with winds of time very fast. This can be seen from the vast difference between how people used to dress before and now.

Fashion used to be very different in metros and small towns in earlier days. But now the differences have gone down to a great extent due to many reasons. Online website such as jabong, snapdeal, myntra, etc. delivers fashion at the doorstep.

Not only women's fashion market is becoming popular. Shop-

ping sites make available most of the branded clothes at lower prices than the real market and this is the reason why most of the people are going after new trends. While it is a good thing to be trendy and follow the latest innovations in designs, fabrics and others, one thing to be careful off is to decide carefully whether the clothes fit us or not.

Blending in and deciding what to wear will be more acceptable without gaining negative attention. Also, it must suit one's personality. One good thing is that ethnic fashion have also evolved a lot and popularization of new designs have attracted lot of attention and acceptance.

'The New Normal Education' in Pandemic

U Mohnish Kumar

The New Normal is one of the most used terms of 2020. However, it means something different to different people. But for people everything after the pandemic is new. So, for students and teachers "The new Normal" is now online education and virtual classrooms.

Most of the students feel this online classes as only about theory. No one would have ever thought that for almost an entire year, they would have to spend their school or college life virtually. Did we believe that there would be a time when we could sit in bed and still be in class? Isn't it every stu-

dent dream come true? But it did not come at the right circumstances.

The world was facing a pandemic; people were lockdown. But learning never stopped. Just like the earth keeps moving no matter what so do we. Dreams don't need a break!

In India, online classes weren't as popular as they were in other countries. But now it's the need of the hour. Every student depends on it. Each institution had to put in much effort to bring this into effect to help students to continue their education. Online classes have different ways of functioning in schools and colleges. There is no right way

as long as education is being provided. Many technologies came to the rescue, such as Zoom, Google classrooms, Google Meet etc. Some schools and institutions with aid from others even provided smartphones to their students to attend classes.

Internet service providers came to the rescue by reducing their pricing or providing more data for the same price. And in remote places where zoom was not an option or a possibility WhatsApp was also used for online classes.

Online classes have many advantages. Teachers can record their lectures and post it on

YouTube or their college website. A student can refer the lecture at any number of times to listen to it. This is very useful during the time of exams when a student comes across many doubts.

Another considerable advantage is accessibility. Each student can attend classes from the safety and comforts of their house. Another advantage is that since the students are comfortable, it helps them concentrate with very few distractions and learn more.

Though there are both advantages and disadvantages to online classes like a coin has two sides. No matter how good online classes are

some students still prefer or need physical classes. Online classes may help the students who grasp the concepts easily, but for those who take their time and need extra clarification, this becomes a complication. From a teacher's perspective, it is difficult for them to teach as they used to have physical interaction with the students.

It is also difficult for a teacher to ascertain whether a student understood the concepts being taught entirely or not. No matter how good online classes are, education is more than learning syllabus, but learning for life. An online class can never make up for the experiences gained

in college or school. The bond with teachers we develop and friends we make, who may stay for life; all of these cannot be experienced virtually.

"Now that the dream of attending classes from home is fulfilled, as a student I can say that I am ready to go back to the "old normal" the joy of walking into college, meeting friends, and most of all bunking classes like the old students we were". Said Varun, a graduate student. After all it is a blessing in pandemic, thrashed the obstacles in front of the education. Even if we can never compromise with offline mode but still it is a golden solution.

A Transformer of The Human Lifestyle

Sakshi Amani

When most people hear the term Artificial Intelligence, they usually think of a robot. But AI is human intelligence in a machine that is programmed to think like humans and mimic their actions. AI has already been deployed in devices that we use regularly. The suitable example is Siri which is used in iPhones and Alexa by Amazon. They have made our lives simpler and smooth. Artificial intelligence is being used by

autism spectrum.

AI is a beneficial option for society and its contribution to a frictionless environment. However, the potential dangers associated with artificial emotional intelligence are vast, and one of them includes privacy violations. The possibility that machines could think and perform various tasks and activities such as human beings do is an amazing feeling. The intellectual realities communicated in computer-based intelligence and AI frameworks are not new by the same to-



Photo Credit : Internet

Netflix and VOD platforms, which analyse their subscribers' viewing behaviour.

In 2016, IBM used AI to produce a trailer of film of Morgan based on big data and machine learning. Picard in 1997, coined the term artificial intelligence, in practical computing which relates loosely to emotion. Emotion is a useful tool that helps to differentiate what is necessary and what is not.

The marketing and entertainment industry are already using human emotions for predicting what type of content will bring a strong emotional reaction within the viewers.

Besides marketing and advertising, affective computing is utilised to create assistive and companion robots, immersive gaming, and aids children with the

ken. It could be smarter to see these innovations as the usage of amazing and since quite a while ago settled intellectual standards through designing.

We ought to acknowledge that there is a propensity to move toward immeasurably significant advancements as a Rorschach test whereupon we force nerves and expectations about what establishes a decent or upbeat world. However, the capability of artificial intelligence and machine knowledge for good doesn't lie solely, or even principally, inside its advances.

It lies principally in its clients. If we trust how our social orders are right now being run then we have no motivation not to confide in ourselves to do great with these innovations.

Tribal Children Adjust to Online Learning

Swetha K

All the students get started to have a new education system in this pandemic situation. The tribal students are also adjusting to this new normal condition.

Vellikulangara is famous for the Chokana Estates and the Anapantham Forest. Around 80 tribe families are lives here. "Kadars" of Anapantham is one of the most primitive South Indian forest tribes.

Government Residential School Nayarngadi, Govt. HSS Vettilappara, G.W.L.P School Vazhachal provide education to twenty-five students of these community. Before the pandemic, the number was 57, which was more than double.

In this pandemic times, getting continuous education became a challenge for the students of these community. They were not getting online classes due to lack of technology and infra-

structure in the area. But the panchayath and some samaritans helped the students by sponsoring two televisions. So now they have access to the government program "first bell". All the students gather and watch the classes in their particular community hall.

Also, BRC (Block Resource Centre) has taken the step to send two teachers in two different days in a week and take classes for all the students. They classify the students into sections according to their respective classes. Other days some postgraduate students in the Panjayath

will come and take classes without any remuneration. "This helps the students a lot to clarify their doubts and each student get a personal attention too", said ward member Joy Kavungal. BRC has been providing the study materials to all the students since long back. There are many good students, including one graduate. Also, many students have successfully passed their secondary and higher secondary examinations. Mattathur Panjayath has been the supporting system of them to come forefront of the society.

All the students

are attending their classes by keeping all the Covid protocols. "Here the people are not afraid of Covid -19, because none of them are going outside. Visitors are prohibited in the community. Panjayath took action to collect all their samples after every two weeks. No positive cases are reported till now", said Mattathur Panjayath president P C Subran.

Government and the people are taking the right actions towards this community. Even though they are suffering from lack of devices and connectivity, they are adjusting the new normal.



Photo Credit : Prasad K

The Warmth of Giving: Kerala Hospital's Gesture Wins Heart

Gopika Raj

As it is said that, "A kind gesture can reach a wound that only compassion can heal". Helping others is not only good for them, but it also makes us happier and healthier too. Helping others can create a sense of belonging.

Doctors and medicine can save the lives of people. Padmavati Hospital in Kollam district, Kerala has set an example of how it can save the lives and future of a family.

Biju worked at Padmavati Hospital in Shastamkotta, as a security guard for more than ten years. He had moved to Kollam from Calicut after his father's death, where

he settled down with his wife and daughter. Biju had earned praise and appreciation from everyone in the hospital, including doctors and patients. He remained committed to his job even during the pandemic and lockdown. The

his house he met with an accident in the main road and he died. Without a steady source of income, his family struggled to meet the end. The management of Padmavati Hospital stepped in to lend a helping hand to the struggling family.

documents etc. She was so thankful to them the whole hospital, as she could earn money for her family. These group of medical practitioners could not leave a struggling live behind. Their loyal late employer family could stand on their



Photo Credit : Gopika Raj

sudden demise of Biju in an accident was a real shock to his family and hospital.

One day early morning when he was coming from hospital to

As it is said "A hospital alone shows what war is" in the same way padmavati hospital helped his family. They gave his wife a staff job as the one who to check the registry and

feet by the small gesture. The hospital says that nobody can take the place of Biju, he was the best security and the right person they could have with them.

One Plus 8Pro: Never Settle

Cassandra Meokee

The One Plus 8Pro is a dream come true for many fans of this company for three main reasons. First of all, it is the first phone to get IP68 rating for touch and water resistance. Secondly, it also supports wireless charging, again a first in a One Plus device and thirdly, it does cost a lot less than it does in international markets and is still a lot cheaper than flagship from Samsung and Apple.

This new device is now IP68 rated for dust and water resistance and it has also a wireless charging which is fast and it is up to 30W. There is also a new camera sensor, a bigger battery, a more powerful processor, and a high refresh rate display.



The One Plus 8Pro has a similar design as the One Plus 8 but with some subtle changes. Its display is actually rounded on the sides, rather than just having curved glass like on previous models.

As a result, the display offers a more immersive feel, though One Plus 8Pro is heavy and bulky and it is not one of the most comfortable phones to use one hand-

ed but the built quality and display mode make up for it. The content in this phone looks good even at lower resolution. 'Anothereature' present only in 8Pro is motion graphic smoothening. When enabled, the picture appears smooth and clear.

The comfort tone in the display is also new and behaves similar to that of Apple's true tone. The 8Pro's in-display fingerprint sensor works really well without any difficulty. Face recognition can also be used. Apps and gaming performance is also very solid.

Overall One Plus 8Pro is very well built, feels very premium, and also looks really great. It is a little big and single-handed use is not so easy but one gets used to it after a few days of using it.

Rereading of Khaled Hosseini's The Kite Runner

Swetha K

The Kite Runner is a heart-breaking story of fierce cruelty and redeeming love. The Afghan-American author, Khaled Hosseini foregrounds themes of sin, guilt and redemption in his first novel. It tells the story of Amir, a young boy from Kabul.

The book was published in 2003. Hosseini's works have set a benchmark for modern literature and invoke emotions that cut to the human heart's core.

The story portrays the life of two closest friends, Amir and Hassan. From their very childhood onwards, they are like brothers and good in the art of kite flying. They both lived in the same house in Kabul, in Afghanistan. The story unfolds about the upcoming local kite flying tournament. But the story leads to another significant event, that is, the war comes to Afghanistan. As it is a perilous place, the people have to head somewhere. In the case of Amir, he has to leave his brother Hassan. Amir and his father moved to America. As the story goes on, we could find that the betrayal haunts him a lot. Then, after many years, Amir wishes to come back and continue his life with his best friend. So the story ends with Amir's quest for redemption.

The book speaks about the trauma theory and how it affects an individual level. It also explores the consequences of sexual abuse, the intricacy of family relationships, and the complex dimensions of friendship. The trauma emerged due to the ethnic conflicts between the

Hazaras and Pashtuns in a war-torn Afghanistan.

The whole novel unfolds the violent events like unexpected sexual abuse, ethnic and social issues, war, loss of homeland, death of beloved ones, social discrimination, and so on. The story is all about

human emotions like love, loyalty, and compassion. The novel gives the reader a ray of hope. That demands the very essence of humanity.

But I think the best thing about The Kite Runner is its sense of fate and justice, that good overcomes evil in the end, despite all odds. With-

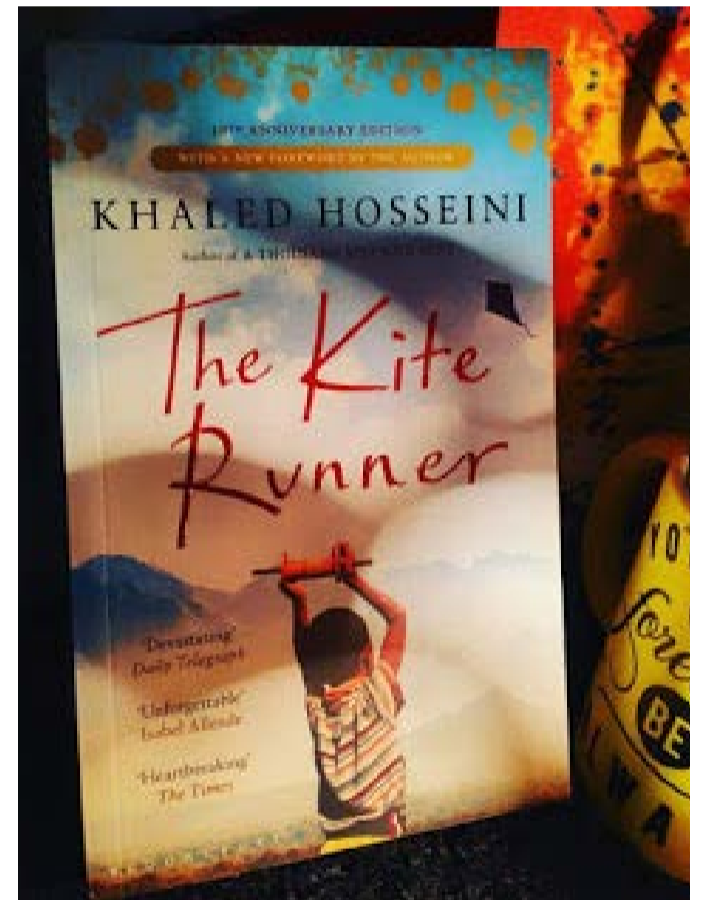


Photo Credit: Internet

the individual search for redemption. Redemption for the crimes committed in the past, redemptions for the regrets of not doing one's duty, regrets for things left unfinished, shame for not fulfilling the moral and ethnic duties towards friends, family, society and country.

The plot of the story completely depended upon the past history of the lives of primary characters and how it haunts them. The Kite Runner is unique not only because of its precise and simple subtitle representation of trauma on multiple levels but also because the novel connects the past and the present most horrible traumatic experiences with tender

out revealing the ending, Amir returns to Afghanistan and makes a series of very different sacrifices to put things right. The final chapter of the book is perhaps my favourite and even thrilled me to reread it.

The message in the ending could be interpreted differently by different readers, what I understood was the story ending with hope. So the book encourages all the readers to feel the goodness in their life. The characters in The Kite Runner are beautifully portrayed. Though the story has created many controversies, still the story has a worldwide audience and their story's unforgettable to all the readers.

Heart And Soul of The Body

Sakshi Amani

Music is an art which is used to express one's emotion, such as happiness, anger, sadness etc. which we experience in our life. Music festival refers to the series of performances or programme events which are organized at a particular place, which is inspired by specific themes such as modern music, national music or promotion of a prominent composer's works.

The music festival usually organised only once in a year with some special entertainment performances in the form of music. There are no limits to the variety of music and artists that perform at these festivals ranging from Jazz, Rock, Heavy metal, Folk, EDM (Electronic Dance Music). **GoMadFest** – It is the festival of Madness, Mastic and Music. This is a three-day festival Carnival of music, arts, dance and camping which is held in the



Photo Credit: Internet

wilderness of Nilgiris hills that is dedicated to the most creative arts in the Ooty in October. The Gomad festival has a diverse kind of music performance that is from fusion to pop, electronica to metal. It celebrates the beauty of art. It is an annual festival that happens during May.

Gulmarg Winter Fest – This is a two-day long snow festival is begun in Gulmarg J&K, which is organised every year by the tourism ministry. Gulmarg Snow fest was started in 2003 to promote and encourage win-

ter sports tourism. The culture performance is organised by the Kashmiri folk artist for a divine experience of tradition in Kashmir.

Music helps in making us calm, relax and provides peace of mind. The music festival is important for people as it gathers a large number of people in a particular place and expresses their feelings through music and dance. Without music, we cannot imagine our life. It will be just like an empty shell. Music completes our life and fills various colours in it.

Change Your Thoughts, Change Your Life

U Mohnish Kumar

Think Straight is a non-fiction self-help book. This book has many interesting points. First of all, it will stay on the reader's mind; it entails readers into it. The book felt more like a conversation. Darius Foroux author of this book is an entrepreneur, author, and podcaster. His mission is to help entrepreneurs, solopreneurs, and creators to build a better life and business, is the author of seven books, and the creator of six online courses. He writes about productivity, habits, decision making, and wealth building. It is very much relatable to real-life situations.

Foroux has also mentioned most of them quoting last century scientists and their works. Though the author has done extensive research about many scientists and scholars from the previous century and their works, he has understood them and wrote in a very comprehensible manner. One does

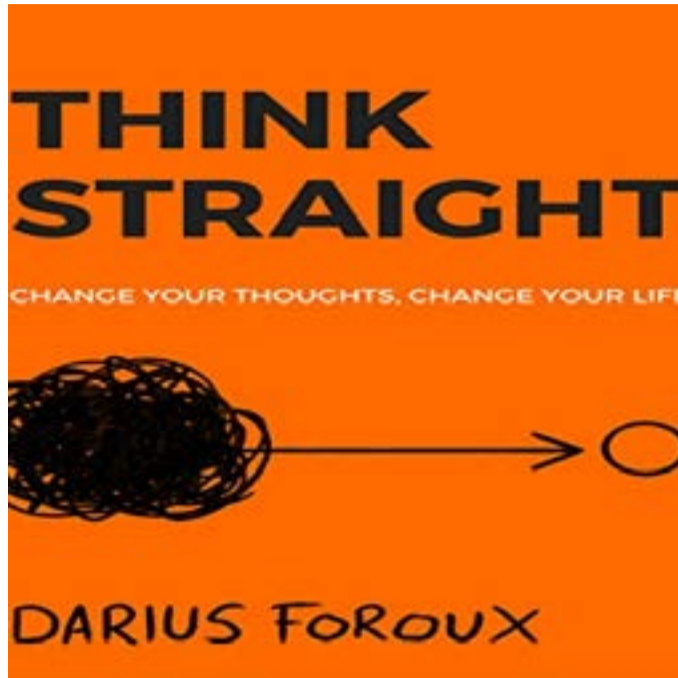


Photo Credit : Internet

not have to be a scholar to understand this story.

The author has also gone into his personal life and experiences. He does this to make the reader feel connected with him and not just someone who is reading a book written by another. He creates a connection with his readers. He establishes a connection between him, he readers and life in general.

The author speaks about his failures and in a different way when compared with other self-help books. He says even

if he got back from the losses, it took some time. When he talks about his troubles, one does not feel he is a rich man who made it in life and is now telling us how-to, but rather a personal connection with ourselves. He has spoken about many valuable points in his book.

The one thing that separates this book from other books of self-help is that this book is not teaching the readers something; it guides them to realize things on their own. This book

helps in self-realization. It comes to us with ease. He does not tell anyone what to think about or what not to think about; he points to channelize one's thinking. Decide for oneself what requires attention and what does not. That is very important in life. This book enlightens one in many ways. It shows how to look at things from a different perspective. Sometimes it's good to think outside the box, and sometimes it's best to stay within the box.

This book makes one realize another critical thing in life: what you think matters the most, not the opinions of those around you or the influencers around you, how you process a situation and not how others see it. This is a crucial lesson. This book will help people have a new perspective on how to see things and move forward in life. It also teaches us to not dwell in the past for long but to learn from it and move forward.

Learning From Yesterday

Cassandra Meokee

When we think of New Year Day, we often link it with new year resolutions. It is when people decides to leave behind their old mistakes and look positively forward to a new beginning. New year resolutions give people the impulsion to challenge themselves and do things they would normally wouldn't do in the past.

But the toughest challenge people faced so far was the pandemic that occurred last year, which soaked up all of 2020. It made people cancel their plans, made them worry about the health of the loved ones and it also made people lose their lives.

There is no denying that 2020 has been one of the worst years people had so far but it has also made us learn some of the important lessons. The most important thing the pandemic has taught us is that no matter how much

money one has, or how many properties one possess, they have no value if our health do not cooperate.

Losing so many lives in 2020, we have learned that the biggest wealth is our health, without it, we are nothing. And health does not mean physical alone, but it also includes mental health. Our mental health is as important as our physical and we must take care of them equally.

Pandemic has also taught us to count our blessings. While others were struggling to have a roof under their heads during the unfortunate situation, some of us were safe under our home. It teaches us to be grateful for what we have and also to have compassion for those who are less fortunate than us.

2020 might not have been the year we all have expected, but it is also a year to change our perspective and move ahead with more positivity and gratitude.

KAMALA

Strength of motherhood during the pandemic

Lakshmi Muralidaran

"A mother's love for her child is like nothing else in the world. It knows no law, no pity. It dares all things and crushes down remorselessly all that stands in its path", Agatha Christie, The Last Séance.

Though the wrinkles on her face and those faded grey hair strands says a different story about her, Kamala Velayudhan in her 50's, is as enthusiastic as a 15 year old.

A mother is a person who would fight with the entire world to protect her children. No obstacles can stop her from doing so, no matter how many strands of her

hair turn grey she grows feeble, the last thing she would want to do is to protect her children. "Everyone is my child. Even they need to be fed like how I feed my children at home". Kamala said as she was asked how she enjoys the work.

It has been nearly 14 years since she started working at the Sebastian Mankuzhikary charity trust, in a small town in the district of Kozhikode. She cooks food for 250 people every day with the same joy as she had in the beginning. She feels that everyone in this world need to enjoy their privileges like every other human does.

Kamala leaves her home by 9.30 am to



Photo Credit : Internet

the church where they prepare the food, and then leave for Thamarasherry Government Hospital, where they have been regularly going to since 10 years now, along with her

driver who helps her to serve them as well. She mingles with a number of patients there with different disabilities or difficulties, even small children. Food is like an ingredient that binds

everyone together and Kamala thinks she binds with the people there, with her food. She sees to it that her porridge, broad beans and pickle are in their best form and doesn't disappoint

them. When she repeatedly said that they also had achar(pickle), one could see her eyes sparkling with pride in what she did. It is not how much we give, but how much we put into it to make it the best, that matters.

Even now, amidst the nationwide lockdown, she makes sure that she cooks and get the food to the hospital and feed as many as she could. Despite her health and family she is on the frontlines to battle against this weapon, Covid-19 with love. As Barbara Kingsolver once said, "Sometimes the strength of motherhood is much greater than natural laws".

A Long Way to Equality

Lakshmi Muralidaran

“Our next dream is to adopt a child provide her with the best facilities and build a home of our own”, Thripathi says as she and her husband’s dream to donate organs via the Mrithasanjeevani portal, became a success on Sunday 10th December 2020, with a transgender section being added in the column for application of donor card.

Kerala has been at the forefront of transgender rights in India. In 2016, the State Government introduced free sex reassignment surgeries in government hospitals. Making a step towards development, Kerala, ensures social development as well.

“The government has been providing enough finances for surgeries, and that has helped a lot of us in our community to live the way we want to, happily”, says Thripathi. Despite her life being

a roller coaster ride, Thripathi and her husband and mates are now comfortably settled in Aluva, in Kochi. There is a category called intersex, who are people born with ambiguous genital organs. Thripathi was born as an intersex child, and took time to realise the differences in her and other



Photo Credit : Internet

men.

In 2014, India recognized a third gender and Kerala was the first state to follow up and implement policies for the welfare of the LGBTQ community. The policy addresses the right for people belonging to transgender communities to identify as "male", "female" or

"TG" (Third Gender). It has provisions to protect the community by providing equal access to social and economic resources, protecting the right to equal treatment under the law, the right to life, liberty and justice, and non-discrimination based on sex.

“I dropped out of school in my eighth standard due to other physical issues, took up baby sitting as a job and earned Rs.400/month. It was my first job and then I moved to Mangalore which is when I realized there are a lot other people who are like me.

This feeling made me courageous and confident enough to own up my inner self and live.” Thripathi travelled from places to places and realized the existence of people like her in this world was normal, her life changed as she moved to Kochi and she was able to fend for herself and managed to be the First Transgender

Entrepreneur in Kerala. She fought for equal rights for the LGBTQ communities in this society

“In other states, our community is respected, but in Kerala, despite being provided with welfare schemes and policies in favour of our community, we lack respect.” However she is mindful about the recognition and love she has been getting from the media and public. She’s glad that she could make a small change in this world for a good cause.

Thripathi, reminiscing her days of hardship and said, “I had promised myself that I would change into whoever I want to and successfully walk in front of these people and make my life worth living for, I am glad that happened”. Kerala has come a long way, took its first and foremost step, all that requires is an accepting society which is not far away, but a humanly thought away

Fitness Apps to Try at Home

Swetha K

Sitting at home for months has made people start their workouts from home itself. There are many online programmes which help people to have fitness activities from the home itself. Here is a list of few digital fitness apps to help you reach out your physical goals from a comfort zone.

Daily Yoga

Daily yoga inspires yogies worldwide with the largest yoga pose base. Daily yoga helps one practice yoga through devices. More than 100 yoga and meditation classes to help people from all levels. A whole series of beginner-friendly tutorials to help the people to find a different and better self in only 2 weeks.

Tread

It’s an online fitness start-up, connects the top trainers and fitness experts with people

free of cost. It covers Zumba, Yoga and some other programs according to the schedule of the users. The users can choose their schedule. Tread organises interactive group workouts with live trainers and introducing the concept of working out ‘anywhere’ at ‘anytime’.

GOQii

GOQii’s smart health ecosystem integration tools for real-time personalised coaching, health e-commerce store, scheduling doctor appointments, and a unique ‘GOQii Cash’ program where healthy behaviour is rewarded with cash discounts.

Curefit

At Curefit one makes group workouts fun, daily food healthy & tasty and mental health through meditation. Their guided workouts at Curefit include body-weight exercises that will strengthen the body and improve fitness.

Medical Field: The Saviours of Humanhood

U Mohnish Kumar

“The good physician treats the disease; the great physician treats the patient who has the disease”. William Osler.

Doctors are the people in whom we see the grace of god. The year 2020 which corona stagnated all hopes, plans and every streams of jobs. Except medical field almost everyone loses their job or had to work from home. Medical staffs are the people who struggle hard to prevent the small virus.

Dr. S. Shruthi Shree is one of the angels in this field who is an anesthetist, a senior resident working in Bangalore Hospital. The role of an anesthetist during a surgery is equally important as the surgeon because they give seda-

tives to the patient who is conscious to get them relieve from the surgery pain.

Dr. Shruthi is in charge of anesthesia and critical care. Anesthetist is a physician in OT (operation Theatre), who take care of the patients before, during and after the surgery. Make them pain free and comfortable during their stay in the hospital. And in the ICU (Intensive Care Unit) they diagnose and treat critically ill patients.

People who become doctors will be highly ambitious about their profession. Dr. Shruthi is also like that and her parents were her motivation to choose this great profession. Anesthetist is a specialization which is very difficult and risky. Health



Photo Credit : Internet

of the patient even after surgery is depends upon the doze of the sedative doctors hive to them.

“The difficulties and risks can be compared to taking passengers on flight, the take off and the landing should be smooth and the turbulence on air should be minimal as possible. This also very similar, taking the patient on anesthesia and getting them back. So, patients’ safety is our first priority”, Said Dr. Shruthi.

Anesthetists should be there in the OT till the surgery ends. Sometimes it requires long time. Dr. Shruthi has been in spend somewhere between 10 to 12 hours. During lockdown all the medical staffs got duty in covid ward, it was a challenging time that every doctors and other medical staffs experienced. According to Dr. Shruthi mental and physical safety was a hurdle.

She took all the safety

precautions while being posted in the covid ward. She did regular sanitization of hands and wearing masks all the time and also personal protective gears when treating patients. PPE kit (personal protective equipment) was one of the most difficult tasks she has experienced during this time. There would be sweating, breathing difficulties, poor vision and sometimes even exhaustion.

During these difficult times the entire working pattern had changed with a lot of stress. Entire hospital atmosphere had changed into a tension. Other difficulties are about the people or neighbors’ approach to the medical staffs; they always worried to get closer to

the people from medical field and that created a lot of misconceptions and panics in society.

Dr. Shruthi also faced some issues even though she was blessed with the understandable people around her. Her family, close friends and even neighbors were worried. But they knew that all the safety precautions were maintained and followed.

“Double sanitization of my belongings and minimizing the use of personal equipment. Taking personal hygiene measures before going to or coming back from the hospital. Also, by maintaining social distancing” she said.

As a doctor with all hopes and being optimistic she said with a smile that “This too shall pass”.