



Reviving ancient theatre traditions

Jeba Janet D

Among the different forms of storytelling practised in Tamil Nadu (TN), Therukoothu is one of the oldest forms of theatre. Each community in TN has its form of Therukoothu, expressing its history. Often played in the months of March-April and July-August, it is conducted as a solemn for good harvest, rain, or as a part of a temple ceremony.

The major subjects of this street theatre are Mahabharata, Ramayana, Periya Puranam, and other Tamil literary works from the Sangam period. The Therukoothu artists convey their message to the audience through songs, detailed interpretations, and satire. The street theatre is performed on an open street. It starts in the late evening and lasts the whole night. The artists are adorned with heavy costumes and make-up for the performance. They engage in storytelling, delivering

dialogues, singing, and dancing for the audience.

John Milton, a historical researcher, claimed that Therukoothu is a 3000-year-old tradition, which is no longer promoted in theatres or cinema productions as much as it was done in the past years.

"I was enrolled in this art at the age of 12 and went to Kannappa Thambiran School run by P K Sambantham, a fifth-generation Therukoothu artist, to learn the craft," said Prakash Raj, a Therukoothu artist. "When I was learning Therukoothu, we didn't anticipate making money from it, but today's youth expect money, and when they realise they won't earn, they start to lose interest," he added.

However, Milton believes the art form is on the verge of extinction. "Therukoothu is lagging because it is not updated with other art forms. This may be due to reasons such as changing audience preferences, globalisation, and the rise of

digital media," he added.

One of the significant reasons for the failure of this art form is the insufficient profitability it generates, expressed Milton. The lack of financial support can prevent artists from investing in their craft, improving their skills, and developing new techniques. This can lead to a decline in the quality of performances, making it harder to attract and retain audiences.

Milton believes that Therukoothu will certainly regain its position if it can update to the present contemporary society, suggesting that there is still hope for the art form. "Improvising Therukoothu may involve incorporating new technologies and small translations from ancient complicated Tamil words to uncomplicated words in the script. This will help them understand the script for the audience, which can reach a wider audience, appeal to younger generations, and create new revenue streams," he added.



Therukoothu artist Prakash Raj

From canvas to calm, a therapeutic transformation of art therapy

Sreeja Deb

The moment you step into an art therapy studio, you feel a sense of calm wash over you. The scent of fresh paint and the soft hum of music in the background creates an atmosphere of tranquillity and creativity. You can feel the tension in your body start to release as you take a seat at the table, surrounded by an array of art supplies.

The sole way of medication may not always work while treating a patient, instead, several therapy approaches are needed that will help the patient's mental health recover faster.

Art therapy is a kaleidoscope of colours, shapes, and textures that invites us to explore the depths of our inner selves. It's a haven where we can use the magic of art to express our deepest thoughts, feelings, and experiences. The art created is the direct resemblance of one's state of mind along with creativity.

The British artist Adrian Hill came up with the term 'art therapy' during the 1940s. Around the mid-20th century, Europe saw the emergence of art therapy as a formalised medical discipline. After its emergence, it was initially used for treating tuberculosis patients.

When the entire world was confined within the four walls during the pandemic disrupting mental well-being, health professionals advised the general public to keep themselves busy by engaging in activities like art and craft as they have positive effects on people.

The act of creating art itself is therapeutic as it engages the mind and body in a way that promotes relaxation, mindfulness, and self-reflection. As individuals engage in the creative process, they can let go of their inhibitions and connect with their emotions on a deeper level.

Aakanksha Awasthi, an art-based therapist and chakra healer, gives an insight into her perception of art therapy. "Art is an expression of a person. We all perceive it differently and have our distinctive ways of understanding it. For instance, I can define the same landscape or pattern differently. Hence, it is all about perception. It helps me to understand the clients more broadly. It is always reflecting their state of mind on the paper," she said.



Continued on page 07

A thrift store 'Beneath the Mango Tree'

Ishika Bhattacharjee

The absence of actual brick-and-mortar shops is one of the drawbacks of India's thrift culture, which are common in Western countries. This results in limited access only to those with internet and digital payment facilities, thereby restricting the outreach of sustainable fashion. Although the informal nature of online thrift stores has its benefits, it also poses a risk of fraudulent activities by allowing fake supply chains and deceiving consumers.

Thrift Therapy is among the very few physical thrift stores in Bengaluru. It is housed under a community organisation named Beneath The Mango Tree. Street animal welfare, job readiness programs, and 'spoken English for employability' sessions are among many other causes roofed under the organisation.

Although confined to a relatively small online community in India, the concept of thrift is snowballing at a great pace in recent years and has captivated the interest of the urban youth. "I think the reason so many youngsters are thrifting these days is that it is sustainable fashion and also saves the environment," said Prerna Selma Ponnappa, the founder of Thrift Therapy.

Most thrift stores are mainly limited to Instagram and websites, making Thrift Therapy stand out from the others. These stores offer a variety of factory-rejected pieces, second-hand apparel, and even closet clearances. "Thrifted simply extends the life of a pre-existing garment and prevents it from ending up in a landfill. It is an excellent way of keeping the garment in the market at the least possible environmental and social cost,"

she added.

The fast fashion industry has faced significant criticism for its unsafe working conditions, environmental damage, and labour exploitation thus calling for a change in our shopping habits. The emergence of sustainable fashion is seen as the best solution to these harmful practices. "Thrifted is a comparatively new concept of buying second-hand clothing and is a big part of sustainable fashion," said Ponnappa.

The items are worn out

The negative perception associated with second-hand clothing arises from the belief that if someone can afford to purchase new clothes, they should not opt for used clothes which initially caused resistance towards thrift shopping.



Customers inside the store

Ponnappa



The Thrift Therapy store

If you shop from a reliable thrift store, you can trust that the items have been carefully selected to make sure they are not damaged. "All our clothes are branded and in excellent condition. We price according to the condition of the clothes and never sell damaged items," added Ponnappa.

Better health at your fingertips with mobile health technologies

Nikita Priya

In a world where technology constantly evolves, it's no surprise that mobile health technologies are revolutionising healthcare. From managing chronic conditions to promoting healthy lifestyles, these technologies are changing how we access healthcare. Gone are the days of pen-and-paper logs and pillboxes, as patients now have access to a wealth of tools and apps that can help them manage their health better.

Now, what effect will these apps have on the patient's well-being and healthcare expenses, and what difficulties arise with their implementation?

"I've seen a lot of changes in healthcare over the years, but I have to say that mobile health technologies are some of the most exciting developments I've seen," said Dr Sudhir Tripathi, an endocrinologist. They have the potential to improve patient outcomes, reduce healthcare costs, and make healthcare more accessible to everyone.

One of the most significant ben-

efits of mobile health technologies is the ability to facilitate remote care. Dr Tripathi explained, "Telemedicine has been a game-changer, especially during the pandemic. Being able to connect with patients remotely has allowed us to continue providing care while reducing the risk of infection. With the development of new technologies, we can now monitor blood pressure and glucose levels remotely, which is incredibly helpful for patients with chronic conditions."

However, it's not just telemedicine that's changing the game. Dr Tripathi believes that mobile health technologies can play a significant role in promoting healthy behaviours and lifestyle changes. "We know that a healthy lifestyle is key to preventing chronic diseases, and mobile health technologies can help us do that," he said. There are apps that can track your diet, remind you to exercise, and even provide mental health support. Using these technologies, we can empower patients to take control of their health and prevent diseases.

There are also challenges associated with the use of mobile health technologies in healthcare.

One of the major challenges, according to Dr Tripathi, is making sure that patients have access to these technologies.

"We need to make sure that everyone, regardless of socioeconomic status, has access to the tools they need to manage their health. This is something that we need to work on as a healthcare system," he opined.

Despite the difficulties, he remains optimistic that mobile health technologies will endure and will keep reshaping our understanding of healthcare delivery, even during a crisis.

"I'm excited to see where these technologies will take us in the future. By leveraging the power of technology, we can improve patient outcomes, reduce healthcare costs, and ultimately, improve the health of our communities," he added.

Continued on page 11



Representational Image

Pinterest

"Mobile health technologies are not just changing the way we access healthcare, they're changing the way we think about our health. With the power of technology in our hands, we have the ability to transform our lives and create a healthier future for all."

-Dr Sudhir Tripathi

Kalaictibles: Preserving Tamil artforms for future generations



The entry of Maduraiveeran in fire

Surendar



Therukoothu crown

Facebook



Maduraiveeran

Surendar



Actor Vijay Sethupathi in Therukoothu costume

Twitter

Jeba Janet D

'Kalaictibles - Own Your Roots' is an organisation that collects artefacts associated with Tamil culture, art forms, and totems. Kalaictibles aims to spread art across society and educate people about the various art forms that are slowly being replaced. Surendar, the founder of Kalaictibles and an ardent admirer of Therukoothu, talks about the need to protect the dying art forms in Tamil culture. He believes that Therukoothu is unpopular because people aren't aware of the art form. To enlighten the public about the art form, he showcased photographs of various forms of Therukoothu in Besant Nagar Beach, Chennai, under the title 'Kaatchi Pilai - a tribute to storytellers.'

"A society can be destroyed by simply erasing its culture and language. Thus, we must reach out to people from the ground level about the significance of our cultural and traditional arts," said Surendar, highlighting the importance of art and culture in a society.

There are only a few villages where the rare Therukoothu performance known as 'Maduraiveeran' is performed. Due to intolerance and disputes within the caste system, this art form was never played in urban areas. It was the first time in Chennai that a Maduraiveeran Therukoothu artist was invited to perform the play at Kaatchi Pilai. It talks about the guardian spirit of the lower classes. Surendar recalled how a set of the audience appreciated it while some indulged in creating controversies. Therukoothu is not being recognised, and the lack of awareness stems from the fact that it is solely performed in temples which curbs the lower strata from being the spectators.

But after the Kantara movie was released, the government an-

nounced a scheme under which anyone who works in theatre would receive a pension if they registered for it. But there is no recognition for the people working behind the scenes, like crown makers and designers. "We searched all over Tamil Nadu for people who make the traditional Therukoothu crown, but we only found six people, and they are not ready to do it anymore because they are not getting enough money out of it to run a family," Surendar remarked.

He further said that when we talk about Tamil Nadu's culture, we are only talking about Bharatanatyam, Miruthangam, or Jallikattu. It's not all we have, and we cannot forget about 'Therukoothu', 'Parai,' 'Bhoodhakalai aattam,' or 'Mayil aattam,' which are different traditional forms of the culture here.

"We need a revolutionary movie to break our thoughts and see reality; for example, we need a director like Ranjith to screen the sufferings of lower caste people and their lives, we need a music director like Santosh Narayanan to showcase 'Parai' music, and we need a singer like Arivu to make people aware about the depth of rebel songs, but now we are waiting for someone to start a revolution to follow them," Surender added.

Creating a revolution and developing awareness about various art forms, including Therukoothu, is an essential step towards preserving our cultural heritage. The government can play a crucial role in recognising and preserving traditional art forms by including them in the education system and providing financial support to the artists. Therefore, it is the responsibility of every individual to contribute their efforts to ensure the sustainability of this valuable art form.

The flourishing skate culture of Bengaluru

Shariq Ahamed

A 14-year-old boy saw a guy riding and jumping with a plank of wood attached to wheels for the first time. He had a million questions in his head. How is this guy riding it? How is he flying? How is he flipping it? How is it attached to his leg? From the very next day, he was a regular visitor to the park. He will never forget the day a skater held his hand to help him cruise his board. Since that day to the end, his love for skateboarding will never die. Even with ankle rolls and injuries happening every third week since then, he forgets all of them when he is cruising on the board. Skateboarding for him is freedom from everything else. When he is cruising on his board, he is in the moment, and he is living it to the fullest.



Renowned skateboarder Amit Subba

Facebook



Members of Holystoked hitting the city streets

Hypebeast

Skateboarding was a sport born out of a desire among Californian surfers to have a pastime when the waves were flat. Later, it evolved into an art form, a career in the sports and entertainment industry, and even a mode of transport. It has crossed several national boundaries and cultures to bring people together and has created a language for itself.

Indian streets, with time, have grown to become a skating hub for those with a passion for the sport over the last 10-15 years. People of all ages are taking up skateboarding since the sport is now much more accessible. Although skateboarding entered the country late, it has

flourished considerably despite minimal support from the authorities.

Skateboarding culture has been growing steadily in Bengaluru over the past few years. There are now skateparks and skate shops in the city, where enthusiasts can gather and practise their skills and connect with others who share the same passion. The various skateboarding communities in the city are known for their inclusivity



and creativity, with skaters from all backgrounds and skill levels coming together to support one another and push the boundaries of what's possible on a skateboard. Many local events and competitions are also held regularly, showcasing the talent and dedication of the skaters.

Despite its bizarre and hazardous appearance, the sport is more than just riding and landing tricks on a maple board. Uniqueness, creativity, and freedom are highly valued in skateboarding culture. Skaters are renowned for their unwavering commitment to the overall

development of the sport. From being called an 'activity of punks' to being recognised as a sport in the Olympics, skateboarding has come a long way.

Bengaluru's skate scene has been on the rise since 2010. The genesis of skateboarding in India can be attributed to the British skater Nick Smith, who is regarded as the godfather of Indian skateboarding. The city's skate scene kick-started when Smith built the Play Arena skatepark, India's first and largest skatepark on Sarjapur-Marathahalli road in Bengaluru.

As the nation's first-ever public skatepark, the building of the Play

Arena skatepark was crucial for the nourishing of the skate scene in Bengaluru. Play Arena has become a Mecca for skateboarders and skateboarding events since then. As a result, the city has seen a rise in the number of skaters and events as well. Amit Subba, a skateboarder and a member of the Holystoked Collective, a community started by a group of friends with the dream of creating a free skatepark in India, provides some background on the origins of the skateboarding scene in Bengaluru. "Skateboarding in Bengaluru is where it is today because of a lot of hard work from many passionate people," said Subba.

Continued on page 05

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1

Mansee



2

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3

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4

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5

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- 1 Tell your story - Edition 52 at Lahe Lahe
- 2 Mansee Shah Thard - Founder of Lahe Lahe
- 3 Listeners Circle: Creating a safe space for mind, body and soul
- 4 Moulding soul into the clay
- 5 All glazed and shining

Myriad of arts and expressions

Dhamini D

When one walks through the doors of Lahe Lahe, they are enveloped by warm energy and are soothed by the delicate interiors. As they continue inside, they can't help but notice the seating arrangements on the ground, dainty bookshelves, and a range of pottery and artwork placed eloquently.

Lahe Lahe, a community-oriented place that offers a platform for many types of art to bloom, concurs with Pyle's notion. It offers something for everyone who wants to express themselves, create art, or live in the moment.

Lahe Lahe was created by Mansee and Nikhil in 2016. The space promotes comfort for the soul and is a conscious zone accessible to everyone. The Assamese name 'Lahe Lahe' literally translates to "slowly, slowly." The founders believed one must learn to slow down, appreciate, and relish moments to express creativity.

"We found Lahe Lahe to help provide relief and a stress-free environment to

Art is an expression of those beauties and emotions that stir the human soul.

~ Howard Pyle

Lahe Lahe is a cultural & community hub with a cafe & pottery studio championing arts, theatre & crafts

Art in the making



everyone. We are living in a busy world engaging in our rat race. But here, we wanted to provide a space to detach and be closer to art," said Mansee.

By assembling numerous activities such as poetry circles, pottery, dance workshops, musical nights, painting, and yoga, the space has helped many people find comfort and reignite their passion. They help people reconnect with themselves and release the stress they've been harbouring.

Mansee emphasises that overtly religious or political material is absolutely barred in Lahe Lahe, and it only welcomes expressing viewpoints and diversity through different kinds of art. One would indulge in some mindful poetry on Tuesdays or can groove to salsa or bhangra on Wednesdays. "We have organised poetry evenings and music jams regularly since our inception. Sixty per cent of the regular crowd seem to fill in for these two events, with the rest forty per cent being new ones," she added.

Mansee is personally intrigued by the book club and cinema appreciation activity. Her engagement with playback theatre as a

method of expression has helped her grasp emotions and narratives that have helped her realise the need for a safe environment and how art can significantly impact one's life.

When asked how Lahe Lahe differs from other places in terms of expression, Mansee explained, "We don't curate our activities. We welcome artists of all kinds. Everyone can find a voice at Lahe Lahe, a place that fervently believes in being non-judgmental and accepting, regardless of gender, genre, or age."

She added that although people and the space have undergone numerous changes since the lockdown, the essence has remained the same. "We know of encounters in this space that have transformed lives, and that brings us joy and motivates us," she said with pride.

Lahe Lahe has been a space that advocates art in the form of expressions and will continue to be so. It will always be the roof that brings people together, transforming them into a community that appreciates the feeling of oneness.

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There is no such thing as throwing "away"

Is music running behind pompous popularity?

Angeline Claudia

It was a typical afternoon in a suburban neighbourhood. A group of kids gathered in the playground screaming the lyrics 'Tan tana tan tan tara, Chalti hai kya nau se barah.' The kids laughed, danced, and mimicked the actions in the song. While it can be seen as 'cute,' nobody realises the impact it could have on their beliefs and attitudes.

Music is a universal language that can influence our ideas, feelings, and actions beyond cultural barriers. The Indian music industry has undoubtedly provided us with the greatest songs for a variety of events, ranging from weddings to heartbreaks, or a tune that sits extremely well when we are sad or happy, as nothing beats the feeling of being connected to the lyrics.

For decades, the Bollywood, Tollywood, and Kollywood film industries in India have used the appeal of music and lyrics to captivate and engage their viewers. The songwriter, to gain viewership, ignores that those lyrics could be manipulated to construe

different meanings. A song with positive lyrics may encourage people to achieve their goals, form healthy relationships, and contribute positively to society.

On the other hand, a study has revealed that listening to songs with violent or explicit lyrics may encourage violence, drug misuse, or other unpleasant behaviours.

More than what meets the eye

One of the problems with explicit lyrics is the increase in violence against women and the objectification of women, which has long-term effects on society.

These lyrics reduce women to sexual objects rather than fully functioning adults with ideas, feelings, and agency. They hold the potential to reinforce destructive ideas about women, supporting the notion that they exist primarily for male pleasure and their worth is defined by their physical attractiveness.

"Women are not here to prove sexuality or sensuality; they play different roles in society. But when you create an image where women are treated like arm candy, objects of beauty, perfect figures, models through entertainment, it remains in society for generations because it comes back in the form of retro



Gandi Baat from R... Rajkumar

Despite the ongoing fourth wave of feminism, gender stereotyping is still widespread in Indian cinema songs, with obvious examples in nearly every song. This problem of generalisation is not restricted to novice lyricists; established lyricists are also guilty of reinforcing gender stereotypes.

On the other side, some say that such songs simply represent societal reality and should not be held liable for the behaviour of people.

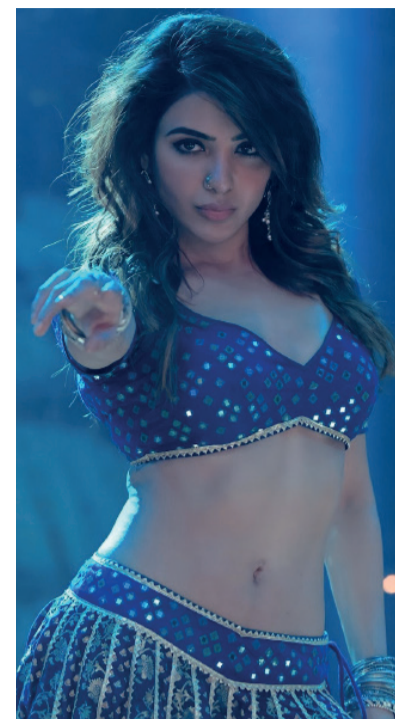
Musicians and songwriters can make use of their platforms to promote positive messages about sexuality and challenge harmful attitudes and

behaviours. It is also important for parents and tutors to provide young people with accurate information about sex and relationships.

Speaking about feminism in the song 'O Antava Oo Oo Antava' from the movie Pushpa, Madhu Bhushan, a woman rights activist, said, "It was an extremely feminist and powerful song for me. The song says, do not objectify us (women) because of the way we dress, as it is our choice. Just because it is overtly sexual doesn't necessarily mean it is violent. It (lyrics) challenges the dominant male thinking of our society. I think it's time we shouldn't be too moralistic about these things as it is extremely limited and dangerous."

"Achi baatein karli bahut, Thandi aahein bhar li bahut Ab karunga tere saath Gandi baat." (Enough talking with good manners Enough of sighing Now with you I'll talk dirty and say dirty things).

Continued on page 10



Samantha Ruth Prabhu

123hdimages

*Koka Koka Koka Kadithe
Kora Kora Mantu Chusthaaru
Potti Potti Gown'ey Vesthe
Patti Patti Chusthaaru
Koka Kaadhu Gown'u
Kaadhu Kattulona Yemundi
Mee Kallallone Antha Undhi
Mee Maga Buddhey
Vankara Buddhi*

*- Oo Antava Oo Oo Antava
from Pushpa.*

Nick Smith and the Play Arena skatepark

Shariq Ahamed

The Indian skate culture was established by British skateboarder Nick Smith. After SK8 Goa, which was built in 2003, Smith took up the Play Arena project, which is a skatepark spread over 16,000 square feet.

The construction of this huge skatepark began in November 2010 and was completed in May 2011. Smith expressed that the construction process wasn't as enjoyable because it took too long owing to several problems, but he is still happy with what the skatepark has provided for the community. "The tale of the build was not really a happy one; I had to live on egg puffs from

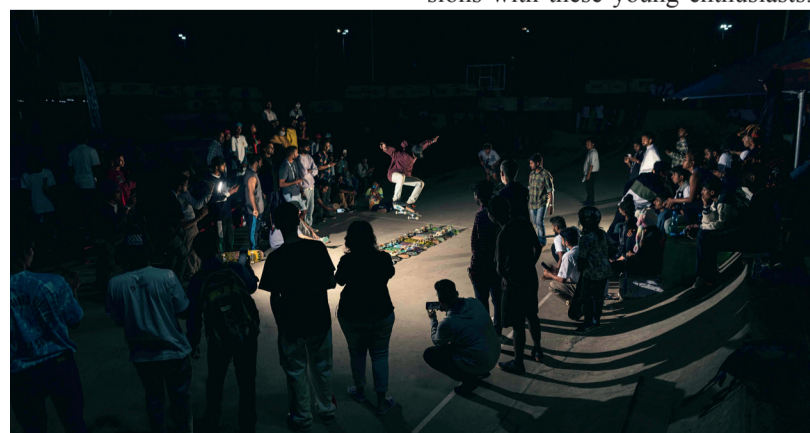
the bakery nearby during the whole process," said Smith, reminiscing the bittersweet memories during the time. "It was fifteen guys and me from Tamil Nadu who barely spoke a word of English, and it was a huge challenge to make a connection and make them work," he added, highlighting the challenges he faced then.

Smith recalled the memories of a group of five friends coming over to the park and learning skateboarding during the nights. Smith, along with this group of friends, formed the Holystoked Collective. He also added that the best memories of the building process were these evening skate sessions with these young enthusiasts.

The skatepark also hosts the biggest skate competition in India, Jugaad, and has managed to do it all the years since its inception. Skaters from different parts of India and around the world came and took part in the competition. Smith said that he is stunned by the fact they are still managing to conduct Jugaad every year, and he appreciated the spirit and love the organisers have for the sport.

"The Play Arena skatepark is the epicentre of Indian skateboarding. It's what has lit the fire for not just Bangalore but the whole of India," he added.

Continued on page 09



Jugaad skate jam held at Play Arena

Inspirecrew



Nick Smith

Alamy



The Play Arena skatepark

Redbull



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ALL JOURNEYS HAVE A SECRET DESTINATION OF WHICH THE TRAVELLER IS UNAWARE.
-MARTIN BUBER

Humans are born with an insatiable thirst for knowledge and unstoppable curiosity. We are always looking for new experiences, thrill, and excitement. Travelling is the best way to satiate this hunger, after all, through experiencing new cultures, trying exotic cuisine, or strolling aimlessly through amazing scenery. As travellers anticipate the adventures ahead of them, there is a palpable sense of excitement in the air. Travelling is a transformative experience that broadens our horizons, tests our preconceptions, and ultimately enriches our lives in ways we could never have imagined. There is an abundance of different travel choices available to meet the needs and tastes of various people.

Now, some exciting and unique travel adventures can offer travellers a chance to step out of their comfort zone and explore new places:

Wanderlust? Go on a solo trip

There are many mysteries and untold stories in this vast and stunning world, just waiting to be discovered. For some people, the thought of travelling alone can be frightening and overwhelming, but for others, it can be an opportunity to embark on a journey of self-discovery and personal growth.

A fascinating and unique way to see the world, experience other cultures, and get to know oneself better is through solo travel. When one travels alone, they have the chance to challenge themselves, step outside of their comfort zones, and create life-long memories.

"I clearly recall my first solo trip. I was simultaneously apprehensive, excited, and nervous. Kerala was the destination of my two-week trip, a place I had always found fascinating because of the way it managed to combine both ancient customs and cutting-edge technology. I had never travelled alone before, so the thought of navigating a city on my own was both thrilling and intimidating," said Ayushi Seth, a solo traveller.

She narrated, "I knew I had made the right choice as soon as I arrived at Wayanad. The food was excellent, the company was warm, and the surroundings were magnificent. My days were spent discovering temples, shrines, water features, and pictur-

esque hills, and my evenings were spent trying out new restaurants and making new friends."

Solo travel can even provide an opportunity to consider your life and goals. One can detach from daily life and concentrate on what is truly important in their life when they are by themselves in an unfamiliar town. Hours can be spent journaling, meditating, and introspection. It helps you understand your true desires and gives you the chance to connect with yourself in a way you never imagined possible when you travel all by yourself.

"The hikes to a private waterfall, Chembra Peak, and 900 Kandi are a few of my most treasured memories. This was one of the ideal challenges because I had always wanted to climb to a gorgeous scenic view. I woke early in the morning, met a group of new travellers, and we started ascending while stopping at various checkpoints. Although the climb was difficult, the views were breathtaking. I experienced a sense of accomplishment upon arriving there that I had never experienced before. I looked out at the incredible view from the top and experienced a sense of calm and contentment I had never experienced before," Seth expressed.

The experience of travelling alone is one-of-a-kind and life-changing. It gives one the chance to challenge themselves, step outside of their comfort zone, and create priceless memories. This journey shows how independent travelling can be liberating, enlightening, and transformative.

"If you're thinking about travelling alone, don't hesitate. Take the leap; you won't regret it," she added.

Don't be afraid to take that first step, all you daring souls out there. The world is waiting, and who knows, you might even learn something amazing about yourself along the way.



Cold, yet beautiful

@Shivya



Through nature's canvas

Kannika S



Heaven at Wayanad Zostel

Kannika S



Pedaling into serenity

@Shivya



Riding Skies in Myanmar

@Shivya



The golden hour

@Shivya



Igniting sun, water & sky align

@Shivya



Hills of Munsiyari

@Shivya

Travel light and leave green footprints

Our awareness and concern for the environment have increased as travel has become an essential component of our daily lives. Eco-friendly and sustainable travel has become increasingly significant, prompting travellers around the world to adopt a more conscious and responsible approach to their journeys.

When it comes to environmentally friendly and sustainable travel, Shivya Nath, an Indian travel writer and blogger is a great inspiration. She has been promoting the idea of responsible travel for several years. The idea behind sustainable travel is to minimise the negative impact on the environment while maximising the positive impact on local communities. By making small changes to your travel plans, you can enjoy your vacation while still doing your part to protect the environment. Nath's love for the environment started early, and she became a vegetarian at the age of six. She believes that travel should be more than just a vacation and that it can be an opportunity to learn, grow, and make a positive impact on the planet.

She began her journey to sustainable travel in 2016 and has since voyaged by train, bus, and boat. Additionally, she has worked as a volunteer on organic farms and contributed to conservation initiatives around the globe.

Inspirational tales and images of Nath's eco-friendly adventures can be found throughout her blog and social media accounts. She has demonstrated that sustainable travel can be pleasant and fulfilling, ranging from hiking in the Himalayas to exploring the Indonesian jungles. Choosing eco-friendly lodging is one of the ways she claims that sustainable travel can be practised. She has stayed in guesthouses, hostels, and eco-lodges that support green living and make use of renewable energy sources. By eating locally and experimenting with plant-based cuisine, she continues to support neighbourhood businesses and

farmers.

Participating in ecotourism activities can also support regional communities and conservation efforts. Hiking, bird watching, and wildlife safaris are a few examples of activities that can offer interesting and instructive experiences that encourage sustainability and the preservation of natural habitats.

Nath has participated in turtle conservation initiatives in Costa Rica and indulged in bird watching in the wetlands of Rajasthan. Environmental impact can be significantly reduced by reducing plastic consumption. To avoid single-use plastics, bring a recyclable water bottle, reusable bags, and durable utensils. Furthermore, using sunscreens that won't harm coral reefs can help safeguard the sea and marine life.

While we consider environment-friendly travel, Nath's dedication to responsible travel has not gone unnoticed. She has received numerous honours for work in eco-tourism and has been acknowledged in several publications, including Forbes and National Geographic.

Ecotourism is a crucial component of protecting the environment and ensuring a sustainable future. The environment and local communities can benefit greatly from responsible travel and the support of eco-friendly initiatives.

Continued on page 10



Shivya Nath

@Shivya

Unveiling the vibrant mosaic of Northeast India's cultural diversity

Yachi Jebisow

The "land of seven sisters and a brother," which is home to numerous indigenous communities dwelling near the hills and plains is a highly heterogeneous region of the nation. Each community has its culture, customs, way of life, language, and dialect. It is one of the regions with an array of plurality in terms of ecology, linguistics, and culture. The region's spectacular diversity is echoed in its beautiful hills, meandering rivers, and lush valleys. The area comprises flat land and valleys, including the Brahmaputra, Barak, and Imphal valleys,



Dzuku valley

is likewise distinctive. Adding to this kaleidoscope are the folktales, dances, artwork, and the finest textile designs.

Matrilineal communities are a unique feature of Meghalaya. In a matrilineal culture, the women of the family receive all inherited wealth.

The stunning scenery, vibrant sunrises and sun-

sets, and lush vegetation are examples of nature at the peak of its glory in this area.

The Northeast is renowned for its pristine ecology, represented by its unique flora and fauna. The coexistence between humans and nature is particularly well captured in people's artwork and paintings.

"The expansion and development of Northeast India's infrastructure, including its hospitals, schools, and other services, is crucial. Protecting the area's cultural legacy and avoiding sacrificing it for infrastructure is equally crucial. While some cultural aspects could be significant and call for preservation, others might not contribute to the greater good and hence might benefit from modernisation," said Zoliana Joseph, an associate researcher (social anthropologist) of North Eastern Social Research Centre, Guwahati.



Eight shades of Northeast India

A collage by Yachi Jebisow

"Although, they are placed back, they never failed, to make us win. So, respect the Northeastern states, without whom, the country can never be a whole."

- Lalita



Continued on page 13

The healing potential of art therapy for mental wellness

Sreeja Deb



Thread painting

Pexels

mandala making create a sense of satisfaction among the people.

The focus is to enjoy the process of creating art rather than on the final product. The therapist's interest is in exploring the thoughts, emotions, and experiences of an individual as they create the art. The act of creating art can be deeply personal and can help individuals to contemplate their difficult emotions, trauma, and mental health challenges.

"The therapy starts by asking the clients some questions which are preliminary and introductory. Then I ask them to draw very basic things. What I do is use the HTPL (House-Tree-Person-Light) test, which is used to draw a human, a house, a tree, or a lighthouse. How they are drawing it or perceiving it will change in 10 to 15 days," said Awasthi.

Awasthi believes art therapy could be a transformative experience for individuals who are open to the process. "While it may be difficult for someone new to art therapy to understand its benefits fully, it is essential to approach the process with an open mind and a willingness to explore and express oneself through art," she added.

Materials used in art therapy have a lot of interesting facts. While colour pencils evoke a strong cognitive or thinking-based response, mate-



Mandala art

Pexels

rials like watercolours elicit a sensorimotor or feeling-based response. For those needing more control, pastel chalk might be stressful as they are clumsy and shatter easily.

Art therapy can be a valuable complement to traditional talk therapy. It aids people struggling with mental health or physical health issues by providing a creative and engaging way to explore emotions, build resilience, and promote healing and growth.



Colour painting

Pexels



Embroidery

Pexels

"ART THERAPY TRANSFORMS PAIN INTO BEAUTY."

-AAKANKSHA AWASTHI



Doodling

Instagram



Digital mandala

Pexels

Don't shop less, shop digital - save the planet fashionably!

Ishika Bhattacharjee

"Style is the only thing you can't buy. It's not in a shopping bag, a label, or a price tag. It's something reflected from our soul to the outside world — an emotion."
— Alber Elbaz

The fashion industry has always been on the cutting edge of innovation. With technology giving the sector new avenues to explore, the growth of fashion from traditional to digital has allowed for a new degree of inventiveness and accessibility. However, the Covid-19 pandemic and rising global issues have put increasing pressure on the fashion industry to adopt more sustainable methods.

Now, what exactly is digital fashion? In simple terms, it is fashion in the metaverse. It replaces the E-Commerce shopping experience with digital clothing. The evolution of digital fashion is highly driven by advancements in technology, sustainability concerns, and change in consumer behaviour. This transition has enabled designers to cut waste, lower their carbon impact, and develop cost-effective, sustainable apparel.

The ability to create virtual clothing that can be showcased on social media is one of the most thrilling aspects of digital fashion. Brands like The Fabricant and Dress X offer consumers the option to purchase personalised images of themselves wearing the chosen item. During the purchasing process, the customer can upload their photo, and the digital garment is superimposed on their image, creating a shareable image that can be posted on various social media platforms.

Bharggavi Rawal, a fashion designer, shared her thoughts on the evolving times in fashion. "In this generation where social media is taking over our lives, everyone wants to frequently showcase themselves in new outfits. This is where digital fashion comes into play, as you don't have to buy real clothing, you just have to rent out or buy a digital outfit with your face on it - which looks as real as an actual outfit," she said.

Over the years, the fashion industry and influencers have established mutually beneficial relationships through their collaborations. Fashion companies have been using influencers for a long time to promote their products, and recently, there has been a rise in the promotion of digital fashion by Instagram influencers. Influencer marketing in virtual reality operates similarly to traditional influencer marketing. The main difference is that influencers receive virtual clothing or accessories instead of payment or free products in exchange for promoting a brand.

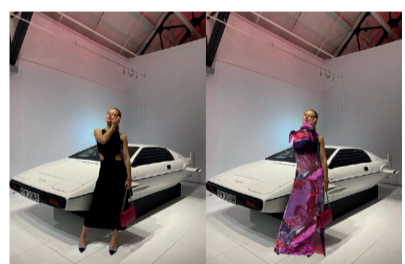
We were just getting accustomed to the virtual dressing rooms, and now we already have fashion brands coming up with digital ramp walks such as The Metaverse Fashion Week where virtual dresses look as real as ever. "This is just the beginning, technology is going to take over the fashion industry

in ways we cannot even think of. Apart from this, we have brands like Lenskart and Titan eyewear coming up with virtual 3D trial rooms as the stepping stone to digital fashion in India," said Rawal.

The fashion industry has always been criticised for the environmental damage that it causes, thus, combining technology and fashion is an excellent step toward sustainability and mitigating waste. The latest Ericsson report states, "At Dress-X, the total carbon footprint of producing one digital item is 95% less than



A digital dress by Dress X Dress X



Left: Original photo Dress X Right: Digital dress

the average production for a physical garment."

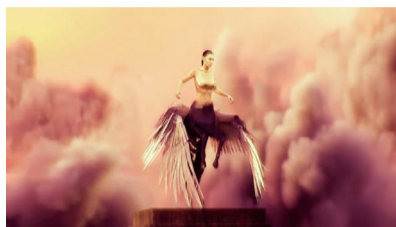
Dress-X is transforming the way people consume multi-brand fashion by providing a solution to the need for constant fashion newness in the online presence of social media users without the need for physical clothing. This approach offers an alternative to the traditional online purchase habits that have led to an increase in inventory management issues for fashion brands.

Rawal continued by stating how individuals currently buy clothes only to be trendy online. "As long as you are satisfied with a new outfit on your social media and not inside your wardrobe, digital fashion is the right way to go. It is definitely a boon to the fashion industry and planet Earth," she added.

Once the technology and AI algorithms are in place to support mass-market scaling, we may see fast fashion industries adopt digital fast fashion to reduce waste and optimise their supply chains.



Adapt digital fast fashion and mitigate waste.



Bella Hadid for Mugler Shots.net

"Nowadays people buy clothes mainly to look virtually appealing on their social media which is why I think digital fashion is the future."

Bharggavi Rawal



Alina Baikova in digital pants Dress X



Brooke Roberts Islam Dress X



Left: Models in digital fashion



Right: Original image Farfetch

Bake or Date? -the choice is yours!



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Exploring the bold and flavourful cuisines of Northeast India

Yachi Jebisow

Each state and tribe of Northeast India has its own distinct culinary traditions and flavours. The topography, climate, and ethnic diversity of the area have all influenced the wide range of food available in Northeast India.

The use of local ingredients, including wild vegetables, herbs, and bamboo shoots in stews, soups, and curries, is considered a distinctive aspect of Northeastern cuisine. Pork, beef, and chicken are common meat options in many dishes.

Fermented foods, like fish, pickled bamboo shoots, and chutneys, are another feature of Northeastern cuisine. With their probiotic content and deliciousness, these fermented foods are luscious and have health benefits. "Despite the diverse culinary traditions of Northeast India, there

also some commonalities across the region. For instance, rice is a common staple cuisine in the region and is frequently eaten with curries made of meat or boiled vegetables. Rice beer is the most common alcoholic beverage. With

Assam being one of the world's top tea-producing regions, tea is another popular beverage in Northeast India," said D'Souza.

He further added that, along with its diverse regional foods, Northeast India also boasts a typical street food scene, with dishes like 'thukpa' (noodle soup) and momos (steamed dumplings) being the favourites. These meals are helping to spread the region's culinary impact throughout the broader cultural landscape as they have grown in popularity both within India and outside of it.

Continued on page 9



Thukpa and momos

@Karmu



Singju, a Manipuri dish

@etssoyu



Arunachal snacks

Vijay D'Souza



@etssoyu

Naga food



Naga pork special

@etssoyu



King chilli and bamboo shoot combo

@etssoyu



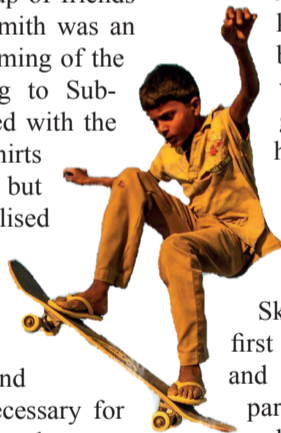
Lotha delicacy

@etssoyu

The Holystoked Collective and The Cave skatepark

Shariq Ahamed

Holystoked is India's first and most widespread skateboarding crew, started by a group of friends united by the sport. Smith was an integral part of the forming of the Holystoked. According to Subba, the company started with the idea of making t-shirts for skateboarders, but they eventually realised that skateboarding requires more than just cool apparel. Later, Holystoked started selling skateboards and products which are necessary for the sport and conducted events that united scattered skateboarders. From spreading awareness to building skating ramps, the Holystoked Collective started growing the sport all over the country. "What Holystoked has provided has always changed from time to time. Starting with selling boards and conducting classes and events, members from the crew formed 100 Ramps, which built skateboarding ramps in many places across the country," Subba added.



Holystoked built a skatepark in collaboration with Levi's, where the brand delivered 200 free skateboards to underprivileged kids to promote skateboarding and give them a way of life. But due to legal reasons, the skatepark had to be closed shortly.

The Cave Skatepark, built by Holystoked in 2015 in collaboration with Adidas Skateboarding, is India's first and only free skatepark, and it has been an integral part of the growing skate culture in Bengaluru.

"Skateboarding is an expensive sport and requires the right setup. In Western countries, there are many empty areas and smooth roads for skating, but in India, there is hectic traffic and few open spaces to skate. Therefore, free skate parks make more sense in India because they provide a safe and peaceful place to skate," said Subba, highlighting the importance and need for free skate parks.

Continued on page 11



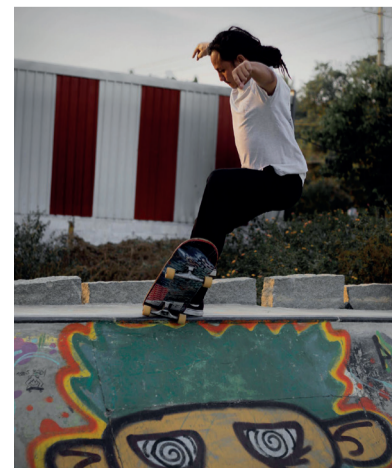
Aerial view of The Cave skatepark

Holystoked



Skateboarders practising tricks at The Cave

Facebook



Subba at The Cave

Facebook



The Levi's Holystoked skatepark

Confuzine

From pixels to places: Explore the world through Visual Traveling

Kannika Shembekar

The world is brimming with awe-inspiring scenery and natural wonders. There are many places to explore and learn about, from the majestic Himalayan peaks to the Caribbean's sun-drenched beaches. But only some have the time or resources to travel the globe on foot; that is where visual travel comes in handy. Through the practice of visual travel, one can experience the beauty and diversity of our planet from the

comfort of their home. Visual travel entails exploring the world through pictures and videos. It is now easier to access than ever, thanks to social media and the internet, where millions of people are posting their experiences and adventures.

Photography is one of the most enthralling mediums to travel visually. A single image that perfectly conveys the unique character and elegance of a place can serve as a means of communication.



Virtual reality takes you everywhere

CSM Technologies

“Traveling – it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller.”
– Ibn Battuta

virtual environment where they can move around and potentially interact with the surroundings.

Whether solo, eco-friendly, or visual travel, each offers special advantages and chances to discover more about ourselves, different cultures, and our planet. We have the freedom to decide how we want to discover the world and leave a positive impression on it.



The majesty of mountains and the wonder of clouds

Kannika S

Technology has made it possible for photographers to capture pictures in stunning detail, accentuating our perspectives on the world.

Watching videos is another way to travel visually. Travel vlogs, documentaries, or virtual tours can more vividly depict a location than still images.

Visual travel is also considered an effective tool in education and cross-cultural understanding. This can aid in breaking stereotypes and fostering empathy. For individuals unable to travel due to various limitations and ailments, it can be an effective means to explore the world and have an immersive experience.



Spinning the wheel of life

Kannika S



A hidden haven

Kannika S

Appropriate tunes with inappropriate words

Angeline Claudia



Dr Amutha Manavalan

When a child grows up in an environment where only the so-called ‘tapori’ and ‘item songs’ are made with aggressive lyrics, it steals away the creativity in their mind.

“... Their mindset will be set in that way, and in the formative years, it will take a lot of effort for children to realise what is good and bad for them. If they go deeper into these lyrics without any parental guidance, this will have a psychological effect on their attitudes and their behavioural patterns. These patterns could be anything from classroom attitudes to behaviour within the four walls of the house. It could reflect the way they look at a woman or the opposite gender. A sense of dignity and responsibility should be created in the society, which will not come with this kind of songs being played, irrespective of whether it is a popular cinema or any other kind of film,” said Dr Amutha.

these lyrics unknowingly due to exposure through various media sources or a lack of understanding of the meaning of the lines. “Music is something that is to be enjoyed by every individual. There is a reason why people for centuries have created music; it is a form of therapy. But when the same music is causing you pain and frustration, that is not an expression. This is when the role of a parent comes in. They have to teach them about every line, what it means, and how it is consumed. For instance, when they discuss Bob Marley, it’s not about marijuana. His song ‘Buffalo Soldier’ is a classic example to explain that he is Bob Marley beside his braided hair and marijuana,” she added.

When it comes to popular music and the use of derogatory terms and themes, it is important to remember that the driving force behind these songs is often profit and sensation. Music producers are aiming to

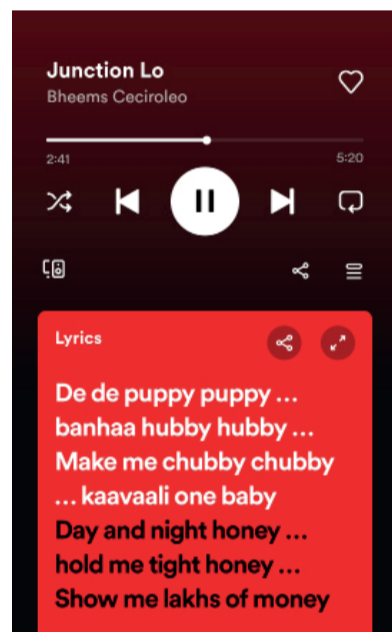


Representational Image

iStock

A study published in the Journal of Children and Media discovered that parents frequently chose restrictive techniques, such as restricting their children’s exposure to explicit music or editing the lyrics, rather than participating in open and honest conversations regarding the content of the music. Thus, children and youth engage in singing

make a profit, and they will often use provocative lyrics and themes to attract attention and generate buzz. As citizens of tomorrow, young people must be able to listen to music and appreciate it for its artistic value rather than simply adapting to the messages and themes that surround them. Ultimately, the power to shape the future of popular music



Junction lo from Aagadu

Spotify



Madhu Bhushan

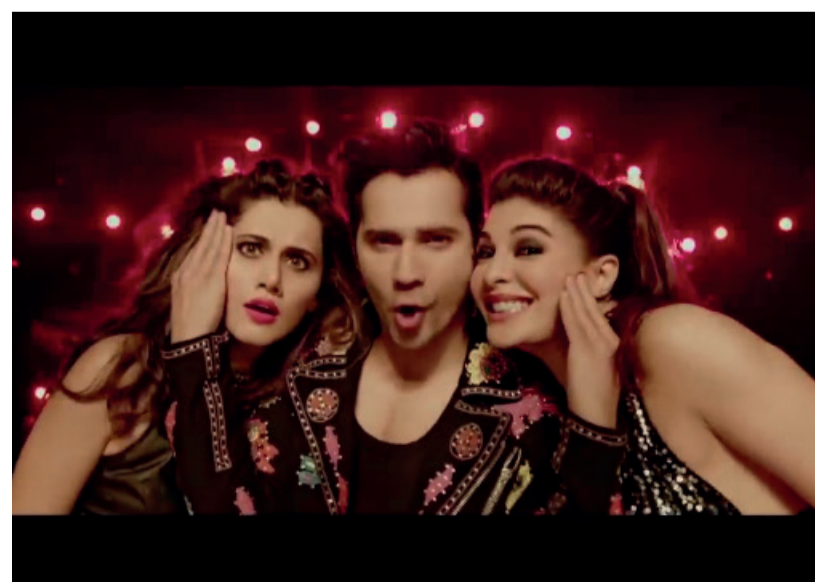
“Children are like sponges, soaking up everything around them. Parents need to monitor the media their children are consuming to ensure they are not being exposed to harmful content.”
– National PTA

Is it cute or concerning?

Cinema is universal and most songs are created solely for commercial enjoyment. There is no restriction on who should or should not listen to a song. Anyone could listen to it and promote it. However, when it comes to children and the rate at which today’s youngsters adapt and grow, these songs should be avoided to the greatest extent possible. Social media is now a place for young people to express themselves through reels and stories. But when young children aged 10 to 15 utilise these platforms to dance or sing songs with lyrics that regularly relate to sex, violence, and drugs, this becomes a cause for worry.

lies in the hands of producers and consumers.

In today’s scenario, where media has a powerful effect on society, it is crucial to consider how the lyrics used in the songs by these industries affect the young and the general public. By demanding more positive and thoughtful messages about sex and relationships in our music, we can create a world in which popular music is a force for good rather than a source of controversy and negativity.



Chalti Hai Kya 9 Se 12

YouTube

Skateboarding, a community sport



Shariq Ahamed

It is safe to assume that the entire nation has been inspired by Bengaluru's skateboarding community, as it has led the way for other cities with all the historic and ground-breaking events like Jugaad, the Holystoked, and the first free skate park.

Skateboarding is not a team sport, yet it brings together people from all backgrounds. Skate communities have played a major role in uniting scattered skateboarders. With the increase in the number of skateboarders in the city, there are a lot of skate communities coming up. Weskate Co, The Holystoked, Bengaluru Skaters, Escape Skateboarding etc are some of the communities in the city. Amit Subba believes that in a city like Bengaluru, where it is very exhausting to reach from point A to point B, having a skate community and people to skate with daily will push and moti-

vate the skateboarders. He further emphasises how the Holystoked, 100 Ramps and Jugaad showed the way to the younger generation to give back something for

That is the idea we need to carry, and that is our culture," he said.

Smith thinks that the Bengaluru skate scene is more real and more based on the love for



Skateboarders at Jugaad

Inspirecrew

the sport and the community. "It is not about being the best skateboarder out there, it is about giving something back to the community and the coming generation.

skateboarding. The skateboarding culture in the city is different from cities like Mumbai or Delhi. According to him, the degree of people sharing their products to



Fellow skateboarders rooting for Jugaad participants

Inspirecrew

push and help out each other in the city is a lot more compared to other cities. Appreciating The Holystoked collective, Smith said that the collective deserves credit for what they have done for the community. "They are not in it for the money, they are in it for the love of the game," he said. "One of the things about Banga-

lorean skateboarding that I really admire is there are not too many people going for Olympic glory and chasing stardom. There is much more emphasis on skateboarding for the sport's sake and not to become the next Mr Olympia," said Smith, highlighting how the city has managed to keep the sport in its right spirit.

The rise of mobile health technologies during the pandemic

Nikita Priya

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought significant changes to the way we live, work, and receive healthcare. One of the most crucial changes has been the increased adoption of mobile health technologies, which have played a critical role in enabling remote care and promoting healthy behaviours during a time when in-person care was not possible. However, what do medical professionals opine about the rise of mobile health technologies during the pandemic? To find out, we spoke to Dr Kumar Shambhav, a physician at AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Science).

"The pandemic has forced us to rethink the way we deliver healthcare, and mobile health technologies have been instrumental in enabling us to do that. We've seen a significant increase in the use of telemedicine, health tracking apps, and other mobile health technologies, which have allowed us to continue providing care while minimising the risk of infection," said Dr Shambhav.

One of the most important benefits of mobile health technologies during the pandemic has been the ability to promote healthy behaviours and lifestyle changes. According to Dr Shambhav, as patients and providers are becoming more comfortable with the technologies, it has become an extremely effective medium in healthcare. "With gyms and other recreational facilities closed, many people have turned to health tracking apps and online fitness classes to stay active, and also we have seen an increase in the use of mental health apps, which have been critical in supporting patients who are dealing with the stress and anxiety of the pandemic," he said.

Dr Shambhav believes that the rise of mobile health technologies during the pandemic has been a positive development and one that will continue to shape the way we think about healthcare delivery in the years to come.

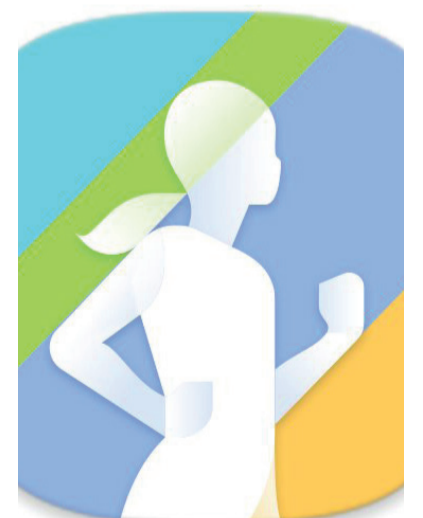
"We want to connect healthcare professional experiences on mobile with patient experiences on mobile and the first step is to allow doctors to prescribe educational materials to their patients from app to app."

~ Todd Zander



Mhealth app icon

Pinterest



Samsung mhealth app

Pinterest



Representational Image



Pinterest



Harshita Agrawal

'Revolutionising diabetes care with mobile health technologies'

Harshita, a 35-year-old woman from Nepal, has been living with type 1 diabetes for years. She struggled with managing her blood sugar levels, often experiencing dangerous highs and lows that required frequent hospitalisations. It wasn't until she discovered mobile health technologies that she was finally able to take control of her condition and live a healthier and balanced life.

"I had always been sceptical of using technology to manage my diabetes. But when the pandemic hit, I was forced to find new ways to manage my care from home. That's when I discovered the power of mobile health technologies," she recalled.

She started using a continuous glucose monitoring system (CGM) and a mobile app that allowed her to track her blood sugar levels in real-time. She also began using a smart insulin pen that automatically tracked her insulin doses and reminded her when it was time for her next injection. With these tools, she

was able to understand better how different foods, exercise, and stress impacted her blood sugar levels, allowing her to make more informed decisions about her care.

"At first, it was a bit overwhelming," she expressed.

"But with the help of my healthcare provider and the support of other people with diabetes online, I was able to get the hang of it." Over time, her blood sugar levels became more stable, and she was able to reduce her hospitalisations and emergency room visits.

Today, Harshita is a vocal advocate for the use of mobile health technologies in managing chronic diseases like diabetes. She believes that these tools can help people take control of their health, even in the face of challenging circumstances like a pandemic.

"If I can do it, anyone can," she said. "It takes some time to get used to, but the benefits are worth it. Mobile health technologies have been a game-changer for me, and I know they can be for others too."



CAFE ZUBAAN

Nurturing the power of tranquility and dialogue



Dhamini D

Tucked under the hustle and bustle of the Koramangala traffic lies an incredibly serene locale that exhibits the qualities of a close-knit community and accentuates profound conversations amidst an abundance of historical and non-fiction books. Its walls tell manifold stories, quite literally, with erudite quotes in radiant frames.

Cafe Zubaan, a community-oriented space that provides a platform to brew dialogues for change, serving Lebanese cuisine, was launched a year ago with a limited menu and bare walls.

Run by a harmonious couple, Jasna and Labeeb, the cafe stands to express solidarity and strength to changemakers and provide a welcoming and safe space for those who want to be an instrument of revolution.

'Zubaan' loosely translates into 'tongue' and refers to a strong voice or language. It began in order to provide a space for healthy conversations alongside nourishing and scrumptious food.

With the focus on unlearning, learning, and growth, the walls of

Zubaan have sayings of thinkers and laureates like Frida Kahlo, Maya Angelou, Mirza Ghalib, and Akka Mahadevi, amongst many others. With few spaces in Bengaluru available for soulful, unprejudiced, and receptive dialogues, Zubaan creates an endearing expanse with a blend of art and culture. The place also witnesses strong voices getting amplified through regular sessions of healthy conversations by social activists and supporters who intend to take the revolution forward.

Ruminating on one of Ghalib's quotes, Jasna said, "While growing up, we were conditioned to certain beliefs, but as we grow, we understand the need to unlearn the narrative and the power it holds." It was the need to create a real and safe sanctuary to initiate liberation that had them curate Zubaan into a homely space. "We believe in the process of patience, unlearning, and growth," said Labeeb, highlighting the thought of becoming a newer and better version of oneself through indulging in sagacious dialogues and events.

They expressed their desire to focus on developing as a fraternity while promoting Zubaan as a host to all kinds of healthy discourse and guaranteed to be a sanctuary for insightful musing.

"We understand the significance of uncomfortable conversations and the amount of change that can spring from it as well," said Jasna, on how growth can be in various forms. They reminisced about the conversation with Akkai Padmashali at the cafe and highlighted the impact it held in the attendees' minds. Through Zubaan's dream project, 'Kahwa aur Kitabain,' Jasna and Labeeb have initiated conversations on revolutionary movements, love, women and finance, and



The Zubaan charm

@cafezubaan



Aristotle with a side of watermelon feta cheese

@cafezubaan



Kahwa aur kitabein - A talk session

@cafezubaan



The appetising platter

@cafezubaan



The serene interiors of Cafe Zubaan

@cafezubaan

the struggles of sexual minorities in India so far.

Both Labeeb and Jasna consider it a privilege to be able to curate the space, including the colours of the wall, the furniture, and the menu, alongside working together, which made it easier for them not to seek any approval and grow with time.

Speaking about the conversations stirred by the changemakers, Labeeb opined, "When you're creating a space like this, you need to be very careful about who you bring, who you are associating with." He also explained that it took them a lot of struggle to filter the people whom they could bring in as they tried to connect with the ones who have a similar stream of thought.

They reckon to have been very particular about who they connect with and have a long discussion on how to see if they can resonate with the core values or beliefs of others.

"We can't force someone, and if they have a different set of beliefs; that is absolutely fine. But to bring someone to the cafe and have them initiate a dialogue, we need to be able to trust them, which shows a huge sign of responsibility," remarked Jasna.

With the narratives changing and youth becoming more aware and alert

about the history and the power the past holds, Zubaan tries to chime in on individuals who exhibit humility, integrity, and grit. Labeeb expressed his desire to watch the youth of today become independent and have a conscious state of mind. "Money is an important factor, and one shouldn't always highlight or let that commodity control or measure one's growth in life," he said by adding that people should be capable enough to understand how vital it is to take a stand and to bring a change. "Else, it'll be the situation of having the same old wine in just a different bottle," he added.

Speaking on art and its impact on their lives, Jasna expressed, "Art is extremely real. As real as it can be. Because we thought for the longest time that art was fancy and expensive. Art is something that not everyone has access to. But I think art is like our everyday routine, it is everything you do, and it is just how you do it. It is the beauty in mundanity."

Reminiscing an anecdote from Labeeb's hometown, he added, "Art is an everyday thing. And it's not far. It's inside you. That little extra effort you'd put out is art. Mundanity can be artistic as well. It's the calmness in the chaos that fuels art."

Exploring the rich tapestry of languages in Northeast India

Yachi Jebisow

There are 200 languages spoken in Northeast India, each representing a unique community and culture. These languages belong to five linguistic families: Indo-Aryan,

Culture, Guwahati. Because of the geographic isolation caused by the Northeast region's high mountains and dense forests, several communities have developed their own languages and tra-



Learning one's own language

Vijay D'Souza

Dravidian, Tibeto-Burman, Austro-Asiatic, and Tai-Kadai. Such a wide variety of dialects are not found anywhere else in India.

As younger generations adopt more popular tongues like Hindi or English, these languages will likely become extinct. It is estimated that at least 80% of the Northeastern languages are endangered, and according to UNESCO, 30 of them are facing immediate extinction.

"Many ethnic populations have moved in and out of the Northeast during the region's lengthy history of migration and settlement. Due to these migrations, the area has developed unique and heterogeneous linguistic and cultural identities," said Dr Vijay D'Souza, a linguist at the North Eastern Institute of Language and

ditions. At the same time, he added that the region's strategic position at the intersection of Southeast Asia, China, and India has encouraged cultural interaction and trade, which has impacted the region's linguistic diversity.

Many of the Northeastern languages are tonal, which means that a word's meaning can vary according to the tone or pitch in which it is pronounced. One such language is Tenyidie, which is spoken in Nagaland and is said to have four unique tones.

there have been linguistic influences from the neighbouring countries. For instance, the Tibeto-Burman languages have similarities with those spoken in Nepal, Myanmar, and China," said D'Souza.



"Learning different language is not only learning different words for the same things, but another way to think about things."

-Flora Lewis

The emerging role of EVs in India's transportation sector, a shift from pollution to progress

Bibhash R Kalita

India is witnessing significant growth in the electric vehicle (EV) industry, with an increasing number of people opting for EVs. According to a recent report by BloombergNEF, a strategic research provider covering global commodity markets, India is projected to have over 100 million EVs on road by 2030, making it one of the largest markets in the world. This growth is attributed to various factors, such as government initiatives, technological advancements, and increasing public awareness.

The government has launched several schemes, such as the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles (FAME) program, to promote the use of EVs in the country. The FAME scheme provides incentives and subsidies to buyers, making them more affordable. Additionally, the government has set a target of having 30 per cent of all vehicles on Indian roads be electric by 2030.

Technological advancements are another crucial factor that is driving the growth of the industry in India. With the increasing demand for EVs, manufacturers are investing heavily in research and development to improve technology and performance. As a result, the latest models with longer battery life and better performance are being launched in the market, said Faisal Khan, an automotive writer, and proprietor of the Motor Beam Company.

According to Khan, the growing public awareness of the benefits of EVs contributes to the industry's growth. As people become more environmentally conscious, they are seeking greener options to reduce their carbon footprint. "EVs emit fewer greenhouse gases and are more environmentally friendly compared to traditional gasoline vehicles, making them an attractive option for eco-conscious consumers," he added.

The growth of this industry in

India is not limited to passenger cars. The adoption of EVs is also increasing in other sectors, such as two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and commercial vehicles. For example, in 2020, electric two-wheeler sales in India grew by over 140%, indicating the increasing acceptance of EVs in the country.

"India has an expanding consumer base for EVs, but the sector still faces many obstacles, one of which is a lack of infrastructure for charging. There aren't enough charging stations in the nation, and adding new ones is a tedious process. This is a major concern for consumers who are hesitant to buy EVs due to the fear of running out of charge during long-distance travel," said Khan.

The high initial cost is a major obstacle to the expansion of the sector in India. Despite the decreasing prices, EVs are more expensive than other available options on the market, making them unaffordable for many middle-class families. This financial barrier limits the adoption of EVs and hinders the industry's expansion.

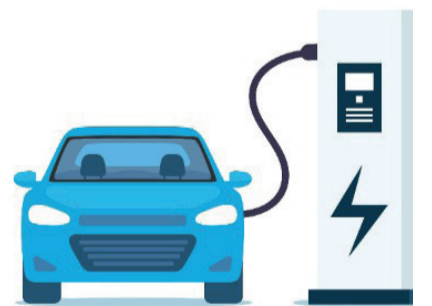
The high initial cost of electric vehicles is a major obstacle to the expansion of the sector in India. Khan opines that the expansion of the electric car market in India will benefit the nation's future by lowering its reliance on foreign oil, enhancing air quality, and creating new employment possibilities. However, the sector must overcome formidable obstacles to achieve a seamless transition to a more sustainable and clean transportation system. To invest in charging infrastructure and make EVs more accessible to the general population, he emphasised the necessity of collaboration between the government and industry players and also said that India can continue to be a global leader in the adoption of electric cars with the proper policies in place.

Khan added, "The manufacturing of electric cars is growing quickly since the cost of mass production is noticeably cheaper than that of other vehicles." He draws attention to the rising acceptance of electric cars as an alternative to conventional gasoline-powered automobiles that are perceived as being more eco-friendly and sustainable.

However, Khan also points out the potential downsides of relying on electricity to power vehicles, including the need for consistent access to electricity and longer charging times. Despite these challenges, the overall trend towards electric vehicles is expected to continue as consumers become more aware of the benefits and governments continue to encourage their adoption.

"I think cars today are almost the exact equivalent of the great Gothic cathedrals: I mean the supreme creation of an era, conceived with passion by unknown artists, and consumed in image if not in usage by a whole population which appropriates them as a purely magical object."

-Roland Barthes



Upcoming EV's in the market

Bibhash R Kalita

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Igniting hope and progress in the battle against cancer

Sreeja Deb

“Awareness is all about communication. The most important aspect is how we communicate the message, regardless of what message is being conveyed.”

-Amarinder Kaur



Panel discussion

Special Arrangement



Awareness campaign by ICS

Special Arrangement



Awareness through marathon

Amarinder Kaur



Awareness through marathon

Praveen Kumar

Cancer, the word alone, can send shivers down your spine. It's a disease that strikes without warning and can instantly turn your life upside down. Despite the gloom and uncertainty that cancer brings, many are attempting to reduce the associated anxiety.

Amarinder Kaur, a communication consultant at the Indian Cancer Society (ICS), Bengaluru, expressed that there is a greater prevalence of fear regarding cancer than knowledge about it. Founded by Kishore Rao with a small group of volunteers, ICS was launched in Karnataka in 1986. It strives to reduce the incidence and mortality rates of cancer in the area by increasing awareness, early detection, and early intervention.

According to studies, it is estimated that one in every three people may develop cancer at some point in their lifetime. Recent statistics reveal that there are approximately over 19 million new cancer cases worldwide. Cancer is a disease that has no boundaries, affecting people of all ages, gen-

ders, and backgrounds. But even in the face of such adversity, some rise above the challenge and find the strength to fight this formidable foe. The stigma attached to cancer is a result of years of misinformation and fear-mongering.

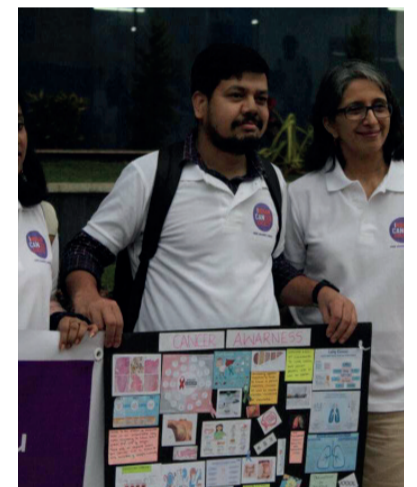
Kaur believes that tobacco and alcohol being the major contributors to cancer, need to be completely removed from our consumption list. “The use of tobacco causes a variety of cancers, including breast and cervical cancer. Hence, tobacco use, whether direct or indirect like passive smoking, causes cancer,” she said.

The hike in the percentage of cancer cases may seem overwhelming, but it's important to remember that there is always hope for a brighter tomorrow. The ICS is stepping in to aid the public by raising awareness, promoting healthy lifestyle choices, and supporting those affected by cancer. It's also playing a significant role in dispelling the myths and misconceptions surrounding the disease and promoting an accurate and nuanced understanding of cancer.



ICS's public awareness campaign

Special Arrangement



Amarinder Kaur

Praveen Kumar

Pioneering cancer care with state-of-the-art technologies and treatments

Bibhash R Kalita

To be a light of hope in the face of cancer, the Indian Cancer Society (ICS), Bengaluru, works towards achieving its mission of educating society through various initiatives like cancer screening, awareness programmes, patient support, fundraising, and many more.

The ICS reaches out to Bengaluru rural districts and conducts awareness campaigns and screening programmes in educational institutions and workplaces to educate people about the importance of preventing cancer by detecting it at an early stage. These projects include information on cancer warning signals, the value of routine checkups, and methods for lowering cancer risk.

One of the key aspects of the ICS' patient support programme is its focus on providing emotional support to patients and their families. They offer a range of services, including counselling and medical care to those in need. In addition to this, the group also raises funds through fundraising events, donation drives, and business part-

nerships to support its activities. Along with counselling, the group also offers medical care to patients through partnerships with hospitals and clinics in the area. This ensures that patients have access to the best possible care and treatment during their journey with cancer.

The organisation aims to provide a sense of comfort and reassurance to those who are struggling with the challenges of cancer. “Awareness is all about communication. The most important aspect is how we communicate the message, regardless of what message is being conveyed,” says Amarinder Kaur, a communication consultant at the Indian Cancer Society (ICS), Bengaluru.

The organisation has established a bridge fund to provide interim financing to low-income patients in need of urgent medical assistance. The fund covers immediate expenses until regular long-term financing can be arranged, offering a crucial lifeline to patients who may not have the means to cover their medical expenses. This initiative is expect-

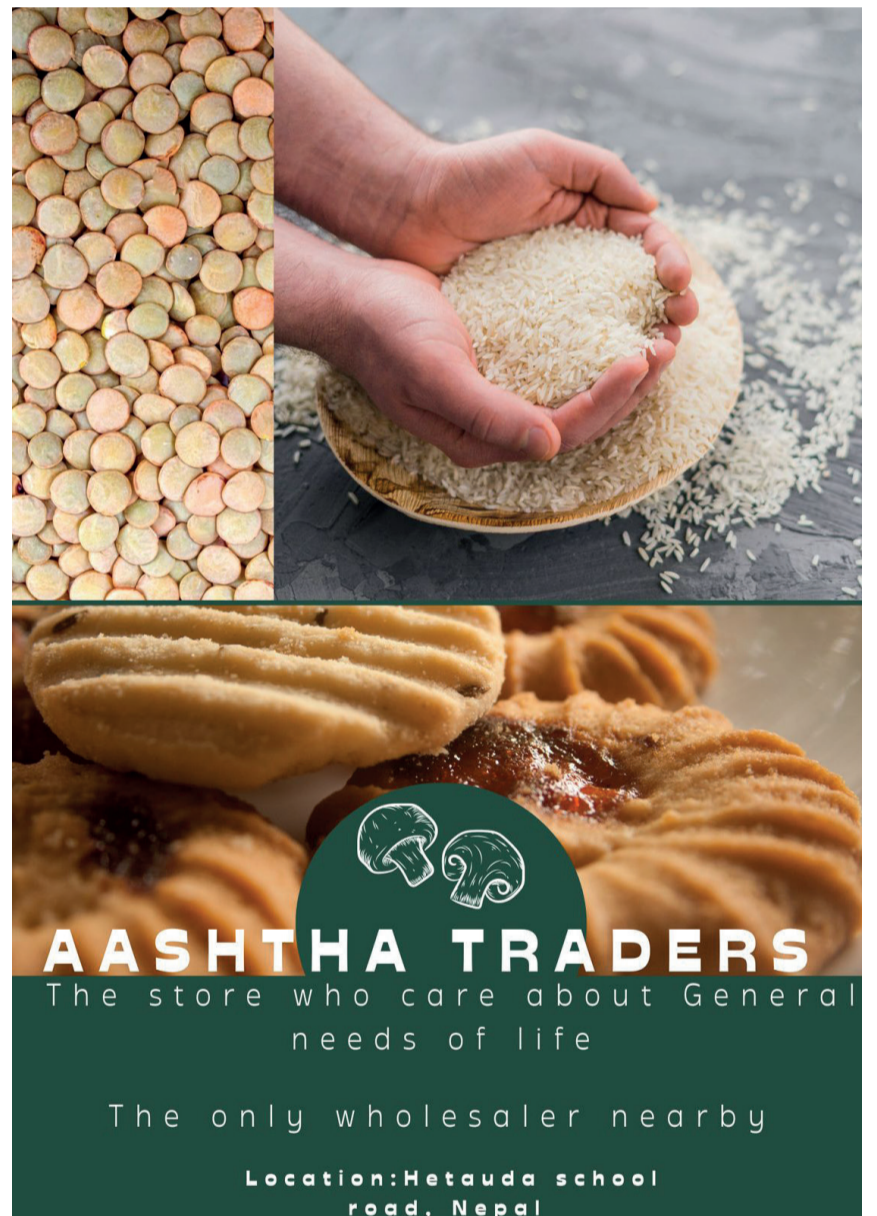
ed to help alleviate the financial burden on patients. “In carrying out these activities, we face two significant challenges. Firstly, we rely on a range of financing sources as we do not have any long-term benefactors for our projects. While most funding comes from companies' corporate social responsibility budgets, it is not always reliable. Secondly, as our target demographic is primarily the rural population of the state and discussing cancer is stigmatised in some communities, it can be difficult to convince them that cancer is a severe yet treatable problem,” adds Kaur.



ICS gathering

Special Arrangement





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