

MARCH, 2026

THE

# LIGHTER

MORE THAN JUST STORIES

SIDE

## SPORTS

INDIA WINS T20 MEN  
WORLD CUP

## NERD ZONE

HIDOKU PUZZLES,  
PUNS,  
RIDDLES AND MUCH  
MORE!

## TECHNOLOGY

AI DATA CENTERS IN  
SPACE

## COMIC STORY

LAWNCHAIR LARRY:  
THE FLYING MAN

## WILDLIFE

THE RETURN OF  
GALAPAGOS TORTOISES

FOR

11 to 17 year olds



**“Warning: One page may cause accidental  
bedtime delays.”**

*-The Lighter Side*

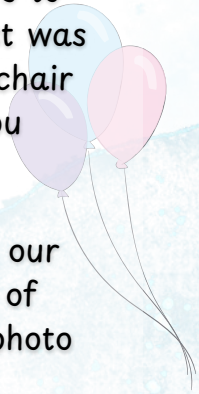


# Hello!

February and March have been exciting months. India played some wonderful cricket in the T20 Men's World Cup. RCB won the Women's IPL. My YouTube shorts feed was filled with clips from the Winter Olympics. Watching people ski and skate has inspired me to plan a winter vacation - I am looking looking at places with lots of snow and hot chocolate.



Putting together the March issue gave me plenty of "Today I Learned" moments. I found out that the giant tortoises of the Galápagos are back from extinction; and that Elon Musk wants to send AI data centers to space. But the story that made me laugh the most was about a man who tied helium balloons to a lawn chair and flew thousands of feet into the sky. I hope you have as great a laugh reading about it.



This month also brought something very special - our first handwritten letter from a young reader, full of thoughtful ideas to improve **The Lighter Side**. A photo of his postcard is at page 59. Please keep your messages, drawings, and ideas coming.

Sit back and enjoy the March issue!

## Revati

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# US and Israel attack Iran



A few weeks ago, the US military started parking all its big aircraft carriers and naval ships in the Middle East.

First, one particular US ship (Gerald R.Ford) made a field trip to Venezuela. Its role was to help President Trump with the whole "kidnapping the Venezuelan leader" thing. After that, its next stop was Iran.

While this was happening, US and Iranian officials were negotiating.



*US telling Iran*

We won't let you develop any nuclear weapons. The US has lots of them. But we won't let anyone else build them.



Iran

That's not fair.  
Hmmm...for now, let's negotiate, as beggars can't be choosers.

Oman was playing mediator.

A few days of negotiations was enough for President Trump. He was done with talking. It was 'boring'.

So, bright and early Saturday morning, the US and Israel decided to kick off a "joint military strike" on Iran. Waves of missiles flying everywhere.

**Feb. 28:** Tehran (the capital of Iran) woke up to some very loud bangs.



A little later, Iran responded:



Oh yeah? Well, we are hitting YOUR military bases!

There were explosions in countries nearby that had US military bases: Bahrain, UAE, Qatar, Saudi, Kuwait, Jordan.



Iran, Israel and their neighbouring countries have since declared "Our sky are now too dangerous for commercial jets to fly. Be careful."

**March 1:** Big news.

Iran confirmed their top leader, Khamenei, was dead.



This regime will soon learn that no one should challenge the strength and might of the United States Armed Forces.

## President Trump

In other words: Don't mess with us, we are the biggest bullies on the block.

Why have two nations, separated by half a globe, now locked in open war? I have unwrapped the backstory of Iran and and the US, in an online post, filled with comic panels.

**Scan this QR code to read for free.**



# MIND TWISTERS

QUESTION 1

A BAT AND A BALL  
COST ₹110 TOTAL.  
THE BAT COSTS ₹100  
MORE THAN THE BALL.

HOW MUCH DOES THE  
BALL COST?

QUESTION 2

I'M NOT ALIVE, BUT I  
GROW.  
I DON'T HAVE LUNGS,  
BUT I NEED AIR.

WHAT AM I?

QUESTION 3

WHAT NUMBER COMES  
NEXT?  
2, 6, 7, 21, 22, 66,  
—

QUESTION 4

WHAT CAN TRAVEL  
AROUND THE WORLD  
WHILE STAYING IN  
ONE CORNER?

QUESTION 5

THERE ARE 3 APPLES.  
YOU TAKE AWAY 2.  
HOW MANY DO YOU  
HAVE?

QUESTION 6

WHICH WEIGHS  
MORE:  
1 KG OF FEATHERS OR  
1 KG OF IRON?

Answers ₹5 | Fire | 67 | Stamp | 2 (the ones you took), Same



## U.S. Supreme Court says "No Way!" to President Trump's tariffs

The US President Donald Trump wants to negotiate better terms for the US with other countries. But he doesn't like shaking hands and talking. Instead, he likes to use "tariffs" to threaten other countries.

**What are tariffs?** If someone in America orders something from another country, they have to pay an extra fee to the delivery person once it reaches their doorstep. That extra fee is a tariff.



*US President  
Donald Trump*

My dear Americans, don't worry! My plan is to make these fees so high that foreign companies would get annoyed and say, "Let's build our factories in America." Then, every parcel on your doorstep would be "Made in the USA" and you won't need to pay any tariffs.

It was supposed to lead to more jobs in America. This meant one long, happy time for all Americans.



In 2025, President Donald Trump started adding these 'tariffs' to almost everything arriving in America.

He used tariffs like a playground point system. If he didn't like your country? Boom! Your toys would cost 45% more. If he liked you? Lucky you, maybe only a 10% fee. It was his way of playing favourites.

In Feb 2026, a group of judges at the US Supreme Court looked at the law Trump was using to set these tariffs and said.....



Hold on a second, you can't do that. The law was meant for emergencies, not for playing favourites with toys and gadgets. If you want to create these taxes, you have to get permission from the elected members of the US.

President Trump was not happy. He called the judges some not-very-nice names. He didn't want to go through the elected members of the US; that's hard work, takes a long time to get a majority vote.





So, what did he do? The very next day, his team went looking for another rule and found a dusty old one called “Section 122.” This rule lets them levy tariffs for 150 days (and upto a maximum of 15%).

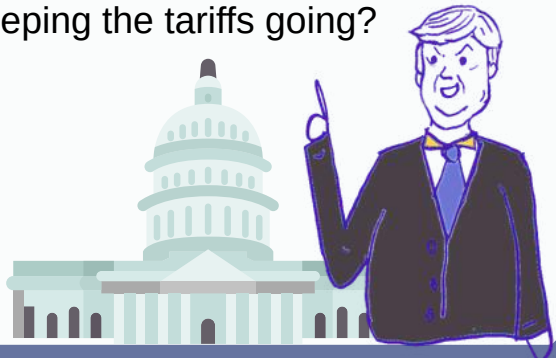


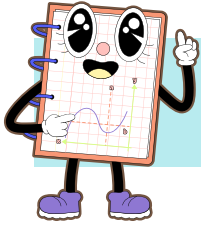
No US President has ever used Section 122 to this date.

President Trump has imposed a 10% tariff on almost everything (and will shortly be going up to 15%).

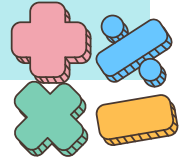
But there’s a catch. When the 150 days are up, if he wants these tariffs to stay, he needs to get the majority of the elected representatives of the US to vote in favour of this.

The question is: after 150 days, will the timer go **ding** and end the big tariff plan? or, will President Trump find another way of keeping the tariffs going?





# Hidoku Puzzle



Instructions (Read Carefully!)

- Fill in the missing numbers from 1 to 36.
- Every number must connect to the next number.
  - 1 must touch 2, 2 must touch 3, 3 must touch 4, and so on...
- Numbers can touch sideways, up, down, or diagonally.
- Each number can be used only once.

👉 Think of it like making a number path!

	8	9	12	11	14
4		7			
		26	17		
	24		18	31	
23	1	28			
					36

22	21	20	29	35	36
23	1	28	19	30	34
2	24	27	18	31	33
3	25	26	17	16	32
4	6	7	10	13	15
5	8	9	12	11	14

Turn the page around for the **Answer**

Level: Moderate



# EUROPE VS. BIG TECH

## THE DIGITAL BREAKUP

Starting soon, French government officials cannot use Google Meet, Zoom, or Microsoft Teams for their video calls. All these are owned by US companies.

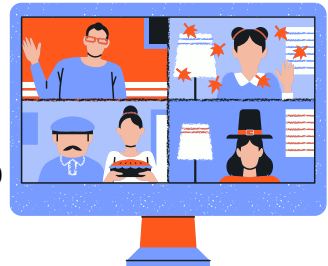
France is worried about security. They are worried that American tech companies might be peeking into France's data and controlling it.



France has built its own video conferencing app called Visio. This app is run by a French company; it follows France's rules and keeps its data in France.

Will it work as smoothly as Zoom?  
Nobody knows yet.

But France is taking the first step to protect its data.





## WHY THIS DECISION?

It all started after the war in Gaza (Palestine). In Europe, there is an international group of judges who look at crimes committed by various countries and leaders. It is called the International Criminal Court.

In Nov 2024, these judges declared that Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had committed war crimes (i.e. starve people in Gaza by not letting any food enter the country).

The U.S. President Trump got angry seeing this. You see, Israel and the US were good friends. President Trump declared that the judges of the court were not allowed to enter the US. Ever. Neither could their chief prosecutor, a British lawyer named Karim Khan.

In 2025, Karim Khan's email address was canceled by Microsoft. Poof! Gone.

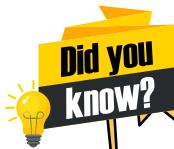
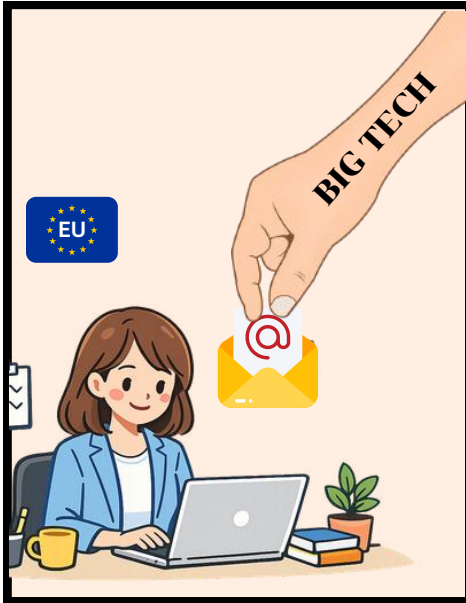


Khan lost all his old data.





That scared Europe. Microsoft deleted an important person's email just because politics said so. What's stopping US tech companies from deleting or locking European government's data, if an American President got angry with them.



Your data travels around the world. When you send an email or message, it might travel through servers in different countries before reaching the person you sent it to. That's one reason governments care about where technology companies store data.



## THE 'DIGITAL COLONY' FEAR

A computer scientist from Germany, Mr. Wehnes, calls this "American technological imperialism."



*"America wants the whole world to be their digital colony. Instead of using ships to control colonies, they are using algorithms."*

*Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft (also called GAFAM) control the lives of most people world over.*

He thinks their algorithms are sneaky because they control what news you see, what videos pop up, and what your friends talk about. They can make people believe fake information without realizing it.

*"Technology is not neutral. Tech companies have social and political interests."*



Jathan Sadowski



Tech companies are not just selling apps. They are selling influence.



## THE REST OF THE WORLD IS ALSO GETTING WARY

Soldiers in Austria and government officials in Germany have ditched Microsoft Office. They now use open source software (free stuff that anyone can tweak) for their daily work.



India is pushing hard for homegrown apps like Zoho (a cheaper Google rival), Koo (an Indian version of X formerly Twitter) and Arattai (Indian version of Whatsapp).



WhatsApp-like messaging platforms have other local variations in Asia. Japan has Line. South Korea has KakaoTalk. Asian ride-hailing apps like Ola, Rapido, Grab and Gojek have a stronger network than American apps; they have built their own mapping systems.

### DID YOU

### KNOW?

India's own payment infrastructure (aka UPI) is a massive success story. It handles nearly half the world's real-time payments and has become a global model for digital inclusion. All data resides in India.

# Where in the WORLD

Travel the world with your eyes and see how many famous places you can recognise!



.....



.....



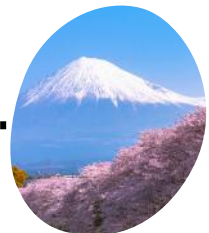
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**Answers** Petra (Jordan) | Colosseum (Italy) | Golden Gate (USA) | Stonehenge (England) | Parthenon (Greece) | Mt. Fuji (Japan)

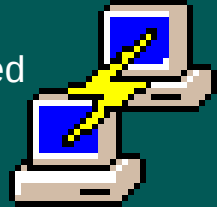


# ELON MUSK WANTS TO PUT AI BRAINS IN ORBIT

*But there's a catch*

Each time you ask an AI tool like Google Gemini or ChatGPT a question, a giant digital brain is working behind to solve it. Even if your question is something as simple as “What day is today?”, or, “What is 5 times 3?”, an AI tool needs to solve a billion math problems. That takes serious horsepower (electricity).

That is why AI is THIRSTY for electricity. We are talking thousands of super-powered computers running 24/7, getting so hot they need industrial-strength fans and cooling systems just to not melt into puddles.



Elon Musk looked at this problem and had what he thought was a brilliant idea.

Why keep these data centers on Earth, when we could just... get them into space?





His plan is to launch millions of satellites covered in solar panels. These would power the AI chatbots.

In space, the sun is always shining. No cloudy days. No night or day. Just endless, free energy. As he famously said a few weeks ago,



Sounds perfect, right? Not so fast.

**Here is the first problem: space is a vacuum**

You know how a Thermos flask keeps your hot chocolate hot? A vacuum between the outer and inner layers traps the heat inside. Satellites in space are like a Thermos flask, but in reverse. Once the sun heats them up, there is no air in space to carry the heat away, so they have to work hard to stop themselves from overheating.

Professor Josep Jornet at the NorthEastern University explains:



An uncooled computer chip in space would overheat and melt super fast.



## Then there is problem two: space junk.

We have thousands of dead satellites zipping around at 17,500 miles per hour in space That is 10 times faster than a bullet. Now imagine adding a MILLION more.

John Crassidis, a former NASA engineer, warns:



We could reach a tipping point where the chance of collision is going to be too great. There could be very violent collisions.

## Problem three: no repair crews.

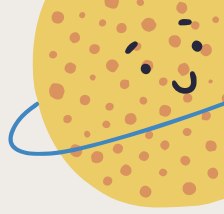
On Earth, if a chip breaks, you can easily repair it. In space? Good luck.

Baiju Bhatt, a space energy CEO, points out:



On Earth, you would send someone down to the data center. You replace the server. But no such repair crew exists in orbit

Space data centers sound cool. But between the overheating, the high-speed collisions, and the zero repair shops, maybe we should figure out Earth first.



# Riddle time

(THE ANSWER IS THE NAME OF A SATELLITE)

I carry a golden mixtape from a pale blue world,  
A message in a bottle, into the void I'm hurled.



I danced with giants, stealing a boost to push me  
through the night,



I showed you moons with fire and ice, a stunning,  
wondrous sight.

I've left the house of planets, where the solar winds don't  
blow,

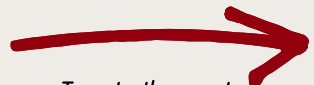
I'll outlive your cities, your languages, everything you  
know.



I'm silent now, my voice is weak, a whisper in the deep,  
Guarding Earth's only portrait for the cosmos's endless  
sleep.



**What am I?**




*Turn to the next page*




# The answer: Voyager


*How to decode the riddle.*




• "Golden mixtape" : There is a 'Golden Record' attached to Voyager, containing sounds and images of Earth.





• "Danced with giants" : This refers to the trajectory where Voyager used gravity assists from Jupiter and Saturn to slingshot further.



• "Left the house of planets" : The Voyager has entered interstellar space, beyond the heliosphere (the protective bubble of the sun).



• "Outlive your cities" : Voyager will likely exist in the Milky Way for billions of years, long after Earth is gone.



• "Earth's only portrait" : There is a famous "Pale Blue Dot" photo taken by Voyager.

# DOODLING helps you Focus



*Expert's Corner*

*Roopa Prabhu*

Artist by hobby

Brand Head Titan, by profession

Art isn't about technique. It's about listening to your brain, especially when it's screaming "I CAN'T DO THIS RIGHT NOW."

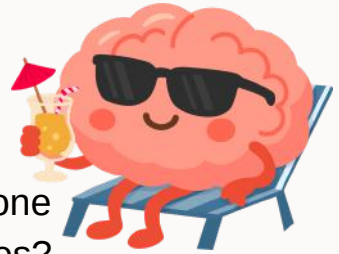


When you are sitting in class, bored out of your mind, sometimes you start doodling.

That is *NOT* you being distracted. That is your brain calming itself and retaining the boring information.



Ever drawn the same thing over and over? That spiral? That cube? That one character you've drawn a million times? That is therapy. Your brain is relaxing.



In 2009, a scientist Jackie Andrade conducted an experiment: she asked 40 people to listen to a boring phone message. Some doodled while listening, some didn't. Later, a pop quiz happened! When both groups were asked to recall details from the call, those that doodled were better. They recalled ~30% more information!

*This study was published in the Harvard Medical School journal in 2016.*

Maybe your teachers  
don't know about this.  
But now YOU do.



As an artist who also navigates the demands of a corporate career, I have come to understand that creativity cannot be forced. Artistic expression is fluid and deeply connected to our state of mind. That's why I allow my *EMOTIONS* to guide my choice of medium.

When I seek calmness and mental clarity, I turn to sketching or doodling. It works like meditation, for me.



When I feel happy and want to create something aesthetically pleasing,, watercolours are my choice..



When I feel like doing something challenging and more textured, I immerse myself in acrylics or oils.



You can see Roopa's art work on her Instagram page @ roopay\_arts (scan this QR code, it will take you there)



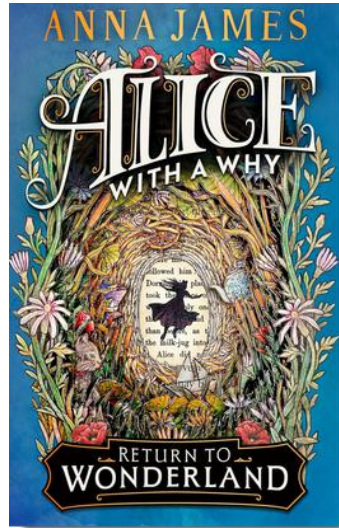


# BOOK OF THE MONTH

## *Alice with a Why, By Anna James Illustrated By Matthew Land*

Alyce (spelled with a Y) is sent to live with her grandmother, the original Alice. A mysterious invitation to a tea party reaches her. Alyce begins to suspect that her grandmother's peculiar tales of a place called Wonderland may not be fiction after all.

Soon, Alyce finds herself tumbling into Wonderland. She encounters a land trapped in conflict (a war between the Sun King and the Queen of the Moon over a stolen hour of time). Alyce is soon entrusted with a mission: to restore what has been taken and bring balance back to Wonderland.



With the assistance of the Mad Hatter, the Cheshire Cat, and a Sailor Fox, Alyce navigates the challenges of this troubled world, solves its mysteries, and finds her way home.





*A Manipuri movie wins the famous*

# BAFTA AWARD



*Team Boong*

The story of the movie 'Boong' follows a mischievous young boy, Brojendro (who is lovingly called 'Boong'). He lives with his mother in Manipur's capital city, Imphal. His father leaves home in search of work, at a furniture shop in a faraway town called Moreh. This town borders the country Myanmar.

After a while, phone calls from his father stop. Rumours reach their town that he is possibly dead.



But Boong refuses to believe these rumours. He decides to bring him home as a 'gift' for his mother. With the help of his best friend Raju, he embarks on a journey to Moreh.



The entire story unfolds through a child's eyes. It does touch upon somewhat weighty issues - like how tribes of people fight with each other, what happens when people from one tribe migrate to another place in search of work etc.



*This news story is not a movie recommendation, because whether you would like to watch this movie or not, depends on the kind of stories you enjoy reading or watching.*

*This news story is more about why a Manipuri movie winning the BAFTA award is noteworthy.*





The Manipuri film industry is like a brilliant artist who has to paint with borrowed crayons. Film-makers from Manipur don't have proper film schools, fancy editing studios, or the money they need to spend to promote their films.

When a movie like "Boong," wins a big, shiny BAFTA award in London, it is like a giant spotlight shining on Manipur's movie industry and their amazing storytellers.



Winning this award might help the Manipuri film industry grow in many ways. First, it's a loud wake-up call to the government - "Hey, look at this talent! Now invest in film schools in this region!"

Second, it sends a strong signal to private companies that regional movies can be profitable. This could attract investors with deep pockets to fund and promote Manipuri cinema.

Third, it gives local filmmakers a huge confidence boost. The BAFTA proves that stories told in local languages with local faces and local hearts can connect with people across the whole world.



*\*The wub, CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons*

# QUIZ TIME

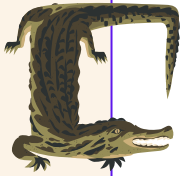


If attacked by a crocodile, a good way to escape is to..

a. Swim away from them



b. Climb the nearest tree



c. Run in a straight line on land



Send us your guesses via email [hello@wsnt.in](mailto:hello@wsnt.in) (click here to send), and we will reply with the right answer!

# SAY WHAT?!

**Want to add some spice to the way you speak? Toss in this phrase in your speech.**

## **BREAK A LEG**

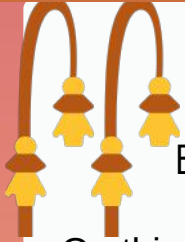
**Meaning: Wish you good luck**

**It all started in the theatre business.** In theater, wishing someone “good luck” out loud is considered bad luck. Because people in the theatre business are superstitious. So they use reverse psychology: if you wish for something bad to happen (like breaking a leg), you trick the universe or the “theater ghosts” into giving you something good, like a great performance!

Also, after each theatre performance, actors bend their knees or curtsy in front of the audience. So, telling someone to “break a leg” was a hope that the audience would love them so much, they’d have to keep coming back onstage for more and more bows.



# NYEPI



Balinese New Year (March 19, 2026)

On this day, the island of Bali plays an epic game of hide-and-seek with evil spirits. They call it Nyepi (the Balinese New Year).

The Balinese people believe that every year, the island gets swarmed by underworld creatures attracted to light and noise.



\*



\*\*

Their response is a masterstroke of reverse psychology. The day before Nyepi, they throw massive parades with towering, demonic

puppets called ogoh-ogoh to lure every last spirit in. Then, when all the creatures come to the venue, the island just... vanishes.

\*MagdaLena7, CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons

\*\*Wiaskara, CC BY-SA 4.0 via Wikimedia Commons



For 24 hours, there are no lights, no fires, no work, no entertainment. Even the international airport shuts down completely. Hotels turn off all exterior lights and ask guests to stay in their rooms with curtains drawn.

The idea is that as the demons fly overhead, they see a pitch-black, silent island and think, "Wait, this place is deserted. Nothing for us here." They fly off to annoy someone else.



And that is how Bali starts the year fresh.

In Balinese, you say  
**"Rahajeng Rahina  
Nyepi"** to wish someone a  
happy new year





© BCCI

# ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP

INDIA MADE HISTORY IN THE FINALS MATCH

Team India won the 2026 T20 World Cup. They beat New Zealand. India created many records in the finals

- India won the cup for the third time (after 2007 and 2024). That's the most number of times any country has won the cup.



- India put up a monster total of 255 runs. That's the highest score ever in a T20 men's world cup finals match. History made.

- Boom Boom Bumrah: Jasprit Bumrah was on fire, taking 4 wickets. He's only the second person ever to do that in a T20 world cup final.

- Sanju Samson smashed 89 runs against New Zealand. That's the highest score anyone has ever made in a T20 World Cup final. Legend.



## FASCINATING STATS & TRIVIA ABOUT THE T20 MEN'S WORLD CUP, 2026!

The biggest sixer of the tournament travelled more than 110 metres, and it was hit by Hardik Pandya



Sanju Samson broke Virat Kohli's record for most runs for India in a single edition of the men's T20 World Cup. That too in only five innings.



The cricket ball travelled over 3 kilometres in total distance from boundaries and sixes in the finals



When Bumrah took a wicket in the final, the roar from the fans at Ahmedabad was measured at over 100 decibels.



India's win margin against New Zealand is their biggest, by runs, in the men's T20 World Cup. Their previous biggest was 93 against Namibia earlier this World Cup.





## ALSO, THE LEFT-HANDED STRANGER FROM INDIA WHO HELPED THE DUTCH TEAM

Amidst all the drama, one of the stories that caught our eye was during a practice session for the Netherlands team. It involves a local cricket hero you have probably never heard of.

When the Dutch team was practicing to face Team India, they had a problem. They were about to play India, whose lineup was packed with powerful left-handed batters. The entire Netherlands

batting squad was made up of right-handed players. That meant their bowlers had no one to practice against!



Facing a lefty is totally different, and they needed help. So, they called the local cricket association in Gujarat (which was where they were practicing) and requested for a left-handed batter. They needed someone in two hours. It seemed impossible, but the local organizers got to work. They found the perfect person: Manan Hingrajia. He wasn't just *ANY* player; he was the captain of the Gujarat Ranji team.



Luckily for the Dutch team, Manan was just then practicing 11 kilometers away and rushed to where they were practicing within 2 hours.

He walked into the nets, played some great shots, giving the Dutch bowlers the perfect practice session.

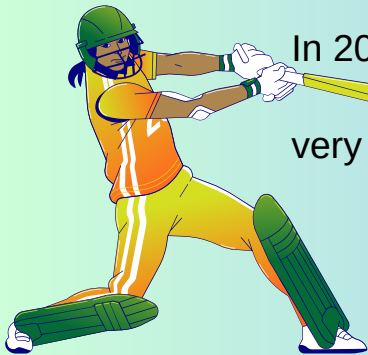
They got a real taste of what they would face against India's stars. Thanks to Manan, they felt ready.



Not-so-fun-fact for the Dutch: Team India still beat the Netherlands in the T20 world cup match.

*This kind of request for local talent to help an international side happens all the time, especially in cricket.*

In 2023, Pakistan went to Australia for a big cricket tournament. In the very first match, Australia smashed them.



Pakistan's coach Mohammad Hafeez, had an idea. "Can we get a practice match?" he asked.

*\*Source: Instagram*



They wanted to face some local players and they had one special request: make the pitch feel exactly like a real Test match.

Cricket Australia said yes. And they didn't send just anybody. They sent some of their finest local cricketers (guys who knew Australian pitches like the back of their hand. The extra bounce. The scary pace. The rock-hard wickets.)

So Pakistan's batsmen stepped onto the practice pitch, ready to learn. They faced bowler after bowler, trying to figure out how to survive the Aussie conditions. It was tough, but helpful. They felt prepared.



**Trivia:** After all that practice, Australia still won the series 3–0.



**Afghanistan men's cricket team do not have a home ground. India has offered them the stadiums at Dehradun, Lucknow, and Greater Noida to practice and play their international matches.**



# Howzat for Humour?

What do you call a cricket player who tells jokes?

A real pun-dit! 😊



Why did the batter bring sunscreen?

Because he didn't want to get OUT in the sun.

Why was the cricket team so cool?

Because they had lots of fans!



Why did the batsman bring a ladder to the match?

To reach the high scores!

The fielder opened a detective agency.

He's great at catching things others miss.





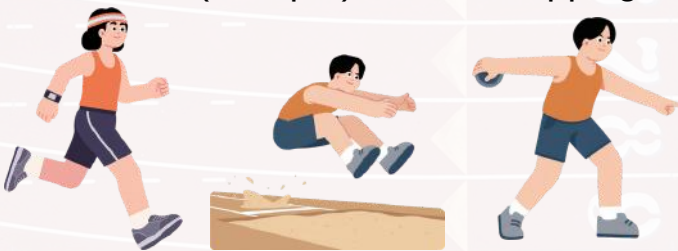
# An Indian wins a historic gold for run, jump, throw, vault, repeat!

An Indian named Tejaswin Shankar just won a historic gold medal for India at the Asian Indoor Athletics Championships (held in Tianjin, China, in 2026) in something called the Heptathlon.

Imagine doing seven different sports in two days. Seven exhausting, sweat-dripping sports. That is called a heptathlon.

The heptathlon events include the 60 metres race, long jump, shot put, high jump, 60 metres hurdles, pole vault, and 1000 metres race.

First, you have to sprint like a cheetah. Then you have to jump far into a sandpit. Right after that, someone gives you a heavy metal ball to throw far into the distance (shot put) without dropping it on your foot.





Before you can take a breath, you have to jump over a really high bar without knocking it down. Then you have to hurdle over things. After that, you grab a long stick and pole vault yourself into the air like you are fleeing an angry goose. And just when you think you are done? Surprise! A 1000-meter race to finish.



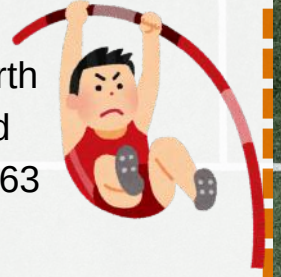
Each performance earns points. The person with the most points at the end gets the gold (and the right to collapse on the floor forever?).

Tejaswin walked in. He looked at the competition. And he said, "Watch this."

In the 60-meter hurdles, he zoomed through in 8.02 seconds and grabbed 977 points. By the time two events were left, he was almost 500 points ahead of the second highest scorer.



Then came the pole vault. He came fourth with a height of 4.20 meters. That added 673 points to his score. Now he had 5,163 points.



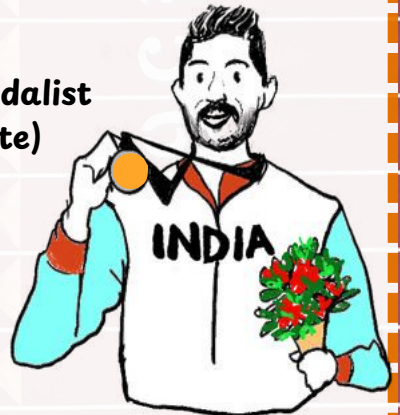
One event left. The 1000-meter race. He had to run almost a kilometer after doing six other things. His legs were jelly. Lungs must have been screaming. Tejaswin finished second with a time of 2 minutes 43 seconds. That earned him 830 more points.



Final score: 5,993 points. Gold medal. History made. India's first heptathlon gold at the Asian Indoor Athletics Championships.

**India's first heptathlon gold medalist  
(the ultimate all-round athlete)**

**Tejaswin Shankar**



# WORD LADDER

You  
GOT  
THIS!

Change only one letter at a time to make a new word for each step. Start from the bottom.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SPORT**

**HINT: A hard rock**

**HINT: type of bread or cake**

**HINT: Points in a game**

**HINT: tiny seed from fungi or plants**

**HINT: Land beside the sea**

**HINT: Not Tall**



**Solution:** SPORT | SHORT | SHORE | SPORE | SCORE | SCONE | STONE

# Ever met a Radio Ham?



## WHO



Before the internet, if you wanted to talk to someone in Japan or Antarctica from your house, you had to build a radio station. A radio ham (or amateur radio operator) is someone with a license to use designated radio frequencies for non-commercial, two-way communication.

## A teenager radio-ham who saved hundreds

Tom K. Jose, a 15-year-old from Andhra Pradesh is a radio ham (got his license when he was 13). When Cyclone Hudhud hit in 2014, it destroyed phone lines in Andhra Pradesh. Tom stepped in to fill the gap in communication. He was the one passing vital messages to the government (about blocked roads and people stranded) using his radio station at home. His call sign is VU3TMO.

## India has over 22,000 radio hams

India has an active radio ham community. They have played heroic roles in national emergencies. During the 2004 tsunami, they were the ones keeping communication going.





# Flying into the sky sitting on a chair



13-year old Larry Walters had a big dream 'to fly'. But there was a problem. His eyesight was poor, so joining the US Air Force was not possible. Still, Larry did not give up.

Years later, while he was working as a truck driver, he came up with a plan.

He was going to tie helium balloons to a lawn chair. He would sit in the chair, float up gently by cutting the ropes tying the balloons to the ground. He would reach ~300 feet, munch sandwiches and enjoy the view. When he was ready to come down, he was to pop the balloons one by one with a pellet gun.

Brilliant, right? What could possibly go wrong?

## The preparation began

Larry and his friends pretended to be from an advertising company and walked upto a store and bought 42 weather balloons.



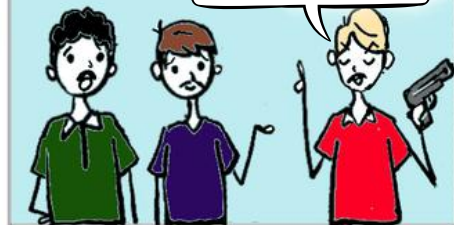


Their mission control was in a friend's backyard. The ground crew consisted entirely of Larry and his trusty buddies.



Are you sure about this?

Never been more sure!



Please buy a parachute. Learn to use it.

Fine, fine! If it makes you happy.



Sandwiches? Check.  
Pellet gun? Check.  
2-way radio? Check.  
Let's do this!



You are going up too fast and too high! COME DOWN now before it is too late!

No way. After all this effort, I am not coming down this quickly!

Friends untie the ropes. The chair SHOOTs up like a rocket.





Larry shivering at 15,000 feet. Air thin. Cold. BRR



He shoots seven balloons with his pellet gun.





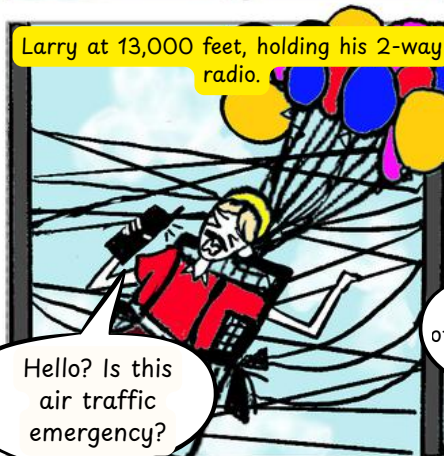
A sudden gust of wind blows and the pellet gun slips from his lap.



OMG. How am I to go down? Umm....what's that? Helium leaking out of some of the balloons? What a relief.



Larry at 13,000 feet, holding his 2-way radio.

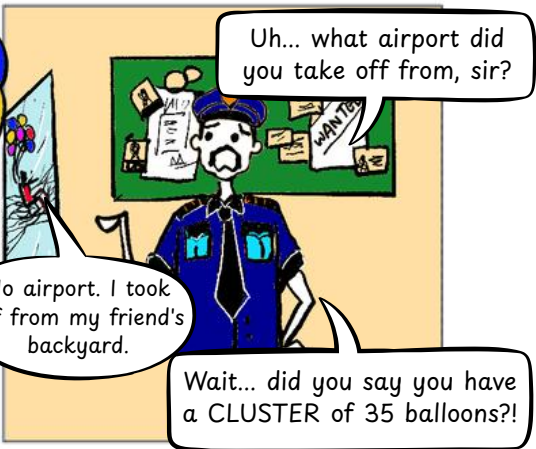


Hello? Is this air traffic emergency?

Uh... what airport did you take off from, sir?

No airport. I took off from my friend's backyard.

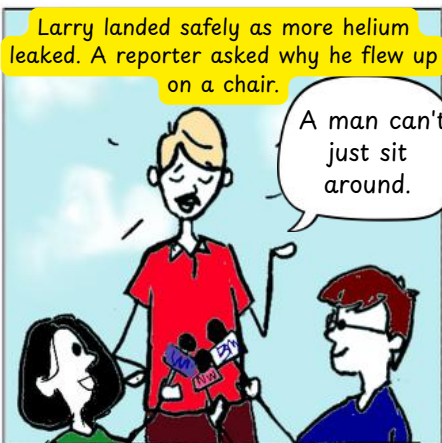
Wait... did you say you have a CLUSTER of 35 balloons?!



Larry landed safely as more helium leaked. A reporter asked why he flew up on a chair.

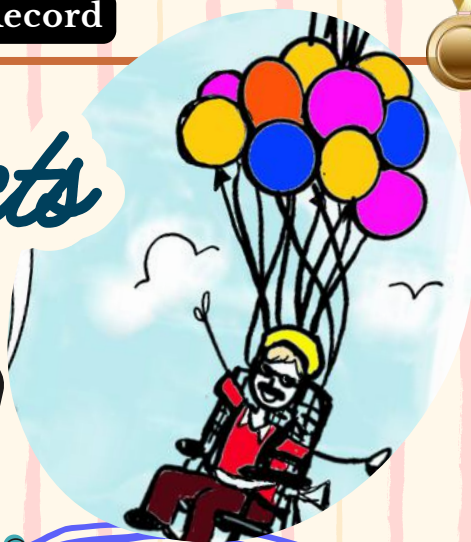


A man can't just sit around.





# Fun Facts



After his flight, newspapers around the world gave him the famous nickname of "Lawnchair Larry" ..

Larry Walters

Police fined him for flying a 'non-airworthy aircraft'.

He named his flying machine - Inspiration I

His famous lawn chair is now in the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

He is in the record books for the highest altitude reached by a chair attached to balloons

He inspired a 2003 film called 'Danny Deckchair', and Pixar's 2009 movie 'Up'.

# DIY PROJECT

## THE BUTTERFLY MUD-STATION

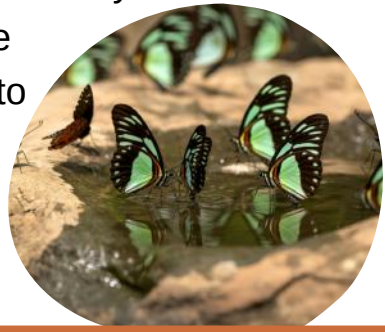


Did you know that butterflies require more than just nectar to thrive? To survive and reproduce, these insects seek out "puddling" spots, where they can extract essential minerals from damp earth.

Here is how you can construct a high-performance 'puddling spot' for butterflies in your neighbourhood.

### Steps

1. Grab a shallow bowl or an old plastic lid.
2. Mix together some sand, a little bit of dirt, and a pinch of salt.
3. Pour in water and stir it until you have a sloppy, muddy mess.
4. Place a bunch of flat rocks or smooth glass pebbles sticking up out of the mud. These rocks are like landing pads that keep the butterflies' wings dry while they drink the salty water.
5. Put your masterpiece in the garden and wait for the magic to happen. If you see a whole bunch of butterflies having a party, you did it right!





# THE RETURN OF THE GALAPAGOS TORTOISES

Over 200 years ago, sailing on a huge ship, was a scientist. His name was Charles Darwin. His ship stopped near a group of rocky islands in the middle of the ocean called the Galapagos.



When Darwin got off the boat, a local man told him something strange. "Hey, I can tell you exactly which island a giant tortoise comes from, just by looking at its shell."

Some tortoises had domed shells that looked like a big, round helmet.



This helped them push through thick bushes to find food low to the ground.

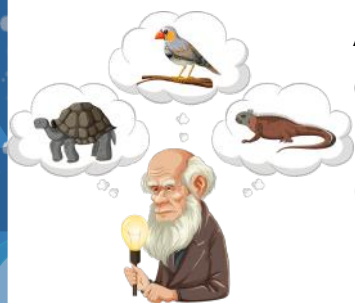


But on smaller, drier islands where the ground was bare, the tortoises had shells whose front part curved upwards.



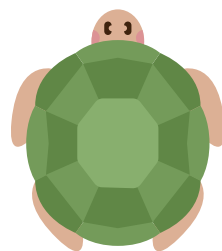
This weird shape, along with a longer neck and legs, let them stretch way up to munch on tall cactus plants

Darwin thought this was interesting. He continued collected lots of other animals and birds along the way, kept them alive and headed back to England.

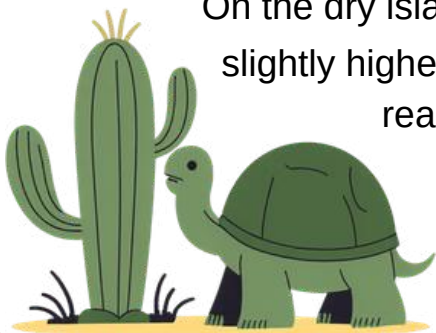


As he studied the creatures he had collected, the clue from the tortoise shells clicked! He realized the different tortoise shells were not an accident. They were perfect adaptations.

On the lush, green island, tortoises born with a slightly rounder shell could move through bushes to find food with ease. They lived longer and had more babies.



On the dry island, tortoises born with a slightly higher shell and longer neck could reach the cactus. They were the survivors, and they passed their long-neck, high-shell traits to their kids.





This process, happening over thousands and thousands of years, created two completely different types of tortoises from one original family.

This was a key piece of evidence for Darwin's famous idea: evolution by natural selection. He wrote it all down in a very famous book, and the Galapagos tortoises became rockstars in the world of science.

## THE TORTOISES DISAPPEAR



If Darwin had visited those islands today, he wouldn't have found a single tortoise there.



200 years ago, ships full of hunters, called whalers, stopped at these islands and captured the tortoises for food. They also brought pigs and rats with them, which loved to eat tortoise eggs. By the mid-1800s, that particular species of tortoise that Darwin had seen, were completely gone.

**Fast forward to the year 2000.** Scientists exploring a volcanic island nearby, came across some strange-looking tortoises. These didn't look like any other tortoise they knew from anything known to live today. Who were they?





In 2008, they did a DNA test on some old tortoise bones. Those weird tortoises near the volcano were descendants of the original, "extinct" island tortoises that Darwin had seen. Somehow, their ancestors had hitched a ride on a ship long ago and started a new life on another island.



This was the chance for a comeback! Scientists started a special breeding program to have more tortoise babies with that ancient DNA. They've now raised over 600 of them in a small zoo-like environment,



In February 2026, 158 of these special, young tortoises were released back into the wild on their original home island where Darwin had seen them.

NASA's satellites are helping these tortoises survive in the wild. The satellites show scientists the best spots with the most food and water. This gives the young tortoises a better chance to survive.



And since these tortoises can live for over 100 years, scientists are using the satellites to figure out which places will be good for them not just today, but 20 or 40 years from now.

If you plan a trip to the Galapagos Islands, you might just be the next person since Charles Darwin to see these amazing tortoises roaming freely around their home. Pretty cool, huh?





# GALÁPAGOS WONDERS!

FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST UNIQUE WILDLIFE ISLANDS.

1.

*The Galapagos islands belong to Ecuador.*

2.

*They are in the Pacific Ocean: You have to sail a long way from the mainland of Ecuador to get there (1,000 kilometers) out into the ocean.*

3.

*They sit on the equator. The islands are so famous for being on the middle of the Earth that one of the largest islands has a volcano named "Equator"*

4.

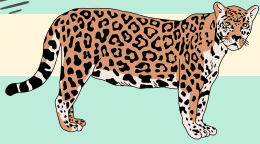
*A chain of volcanic peaks: There are 13 main islands, 6 smaller ones, and over 100 tiny islets. They are all the tops of huge underwater volcanoes.*

5.

*Population: Around 33,000 people live there*

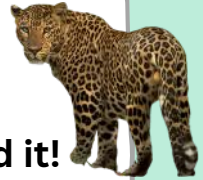


# RUN FOR THE PUNS



Paws-itively Cheetah-tastic

If you see a cheetah running in the jungle, what should you do?



**Run fast, because you just spotted it!**



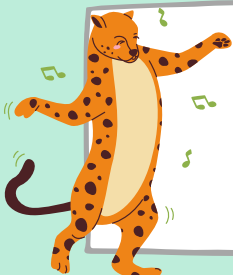
Why is the cheetah such a good artist?

**Because his paintings are really spot-on**

Why don't cheetahs wear watches?



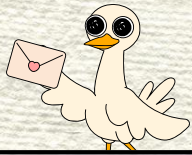
**Because they're always running late!**



What do you call a cheetah that loves to play hide-and-seek?

**An a-meow-zing player**

# Letters from our Little Readers



21.2.2026  
To Sangeetha Auntie  
I'll start off by saying that the Dec, Jan and Feb issues were fantastic. In the December issue I loved the 'Spot the Fake' news and the India Sports. Please also continue and finish the 'Africa: Why should Zebras protest' and Quiz time was really good.  
In Jan, I loved the mythology and the bear comic very much.  
Please bring similar things in the next edition. The pictures were also really good in all editions.  
In Feb, I liked the fact that men wore ~~Red~~ ~~hats~~ ~~belts~~ ~~women~~. If you could ~~keep~~ ~~on~~ ~~publishing~~ ~~fun~~ ~~facts~~ like that.

It would be great great.  
I have some suggestions.  
Some people (not me) like building things and I think it would be better if you say like "Make a bird bath, it will save the environment" and things of that ilk.  
2. Add personality quizzes like what monster are you!  
Love these!  
3. Remove Ram & Ravana. The common man does not like being told how to live his life. Instead, make stories with morals. Lot better.  
Sincerely Vishnu  
(Vishnu)



-Vishnu (10-yr old from Chennai)



That story you wrote about kids as inventors.... that was cool. A 11-year old boy invented a new toy? Plus he set up his own company and made a million dollars? Wow! I am going to try and invent something. Like a pen that automatically writes my homework.



-Nandini Madhu (10-yr old from San Francisco)



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



I found the science story in the January edition on 'Horses can smell fear' cool! If a horse smells fear on me, can it still be my friend or will it run away laughing?

Kartikeya Rao (11-year old, Vizag)

We had a great time researching that story on 'How horses can smell fear.' Glad you enjoyed reading it. But don't worry, they won't run away laughing if they smell fear. They are more likely to give you a gentle nudge as if to say, "It's okay, I get scared of the vacuum cleaner too."

-Lighter Side

The story you wrote about Adidas and Puma was interesting. Have the two families made-up now?

Vani.G (14-year old, Madurai)

Today neither family runs the companies anymore. The famous "feud" is mostly just a family rumour for the younger kids, something to roll their eyes about at reunions. That said, it is possible that some of the older Dassler relatives still don't hang out. But honestly, they are just stuck in old habits from when their grandparents told them, "No, you can't go to that birthday party. They are a Puma."

-Lighter Side

# JASPRIT BUMRAH

*The GOAT, the Magician*



*The magazine is awesome. I am happy that someone is getting my kids to read with joy! Our family is counting down the days until next month's issue.*

*- Sumedha (parent of 12-year old, London)*

*I loved the Great Indoors Bear Story - it was my favourite part. An interesting and fun read,*

*-Kyra Bhattacharyya, Mumbai (10-year old)*

Lighter Side is a monthly publication dedicated to making general knowledge and science accessible and engaging for young minds. Our child-friendly content includes a podcast and a newsletter that cover a wide range of topics. We also help children become better writers through our Writing Courses. Scan the QR codes below to find out more. You can also reach us at [hello@wsnt.in](mailto:hello@wsnt.in)



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March 2026



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Which story in this edition, sparked the most conversation in your home?

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