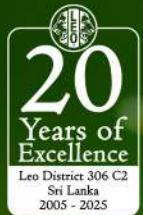


THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF UVA WELLASSA UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

LEO TIMES

VOLUME 17 | EDITION 07 | JAN 2025



A vibrant, close-up photograph of a young child with dark hair, smiling broadly and looking upwards. The child's face and hair are adorned with numerous small, yellow and orange flower petals. The background is a soft-focus green, suggesting a natural, outdoor setting. Superimposed over the bottom half of the image are the large, golden, three-dimensional numbers "2025" and the words "HAPPY NEW YEAR" in a matching golden font.

2025
HAPPY NEW YEAR



LEO CLUB OF
Uva Wellassa University



Leos of Sri Lanka
& Maldives
INSPIRING LIVES



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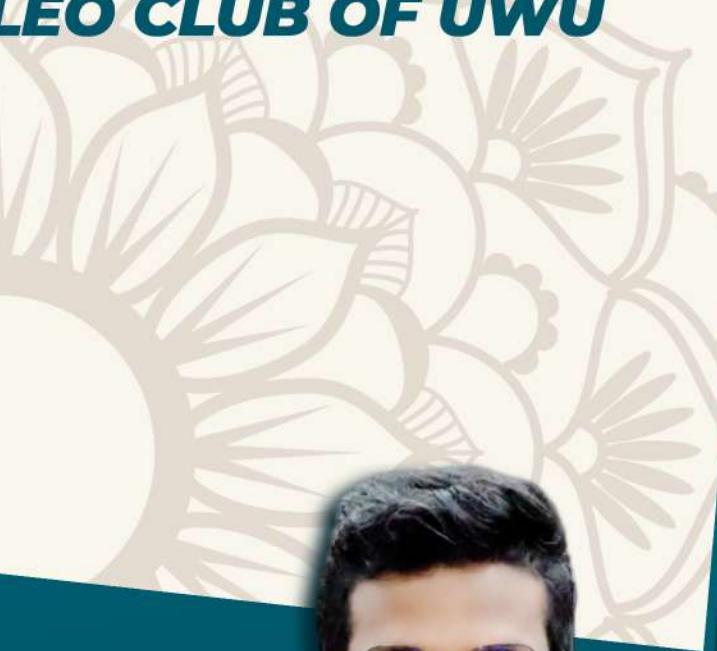
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MESSAGE FROM

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR IN IT

LEO CLUB OF UWU



Dear Fellow Leos,

Being the Assistant Director of IT for Uva Wellassa University's Leo Club is an enormous privilege. This position has given me a lot of opportunities to develop professionally and personally while collaborating with friends and seniors who are skilled, knowledgeable, and encouraging.

Joining this team has been an incredible learning and self discovery experience. I've gained priceless abilities, including the ability to resolve unexpected challenges, collaborate with a variety of people, and successfully carry out duties in a range of situations. In addition to improving my skills, these experiences have allowed me to form enduring connections and friendships that I value greatly.

This job has made me realize the difference we can create together. Together, we are motivating others, bringing about significant changes in our society, and constructing a brighter future. I strongly advise everyone searching for a way to develop, interact, and change the world to join our group.

Thank you for your ongoing encouragement and trust. Together, let's continue to work to strengthen, improve, and grow our community and club.

Leo Nadum Nimsara
Assistant Director – IT
Leo Club of Uva Wellassa University



Nadum
Nimsara



ROARING
EVENTS OF THE
LEO MONTH



HOPE FOR PAWS

HOPE FOR PAWS: A POSITIVE START TO NURTURE AND PROTECT OUR FURRY FRIENDS
LEO CLUB OF UVA WELLASSA UNIVERSITY IS PLEASED TO SUBMIT AN UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF OUR "HOPE FOR PAWS" PROJECT, A HUMANE INITIATIVE AIMED AT ENHANCING THE LIVES OF STRAY DOGS FOUND IN AND AROUND OUR UNIVERSITY PREMISES. THIS TWO-PART PROJECT IS JUST ONE OF MANY MANIFESTATIONS OF OUR TIRELESS COMMITMENT TO ANIMALS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH.

PHASE 1: FEEDING PROGRAM – A NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT

IT IS WITH GREAT ENTHUSIASM THAT WE ARE ANNOUNCING THE SUCCESSFUL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF OUR PROJECT'S FIRST PHASE. ON JANUARY 18TH, WE INITIATED OUR FEEDING PROGRAM, PROVIDING HEALTHY FOOD TO STRAY DOGS DWELLING ON AND AROUND THE CAMPUS AND CITY STREETS OF THE UNIVERSITY. THIS EVENT WAS GREETED WITH ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE FROM VOLUNTEERS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC ALIKE, HAVING A DEEP IMPACT ON THE HEALTH OF THE LOCAL CANINE POPULATION.

PHASE 2: ANTICIPATED VACCINATION CAMPAIGN

TO COMPLETE THE SUCCESS OF THE MASS FEEDING PROGRAM, THE SECOND STAGE OF "HOPE FOR PAWS" WILL BE LAUNCHED. PLANS ARE SET TO ORGANIZE A VACCINATION DRIVE IN A BID TO TACKLE THE TICKS TRANSMITTING TICK FEVER AMONG THE UNIVERSITY DOGS. TO THAT EFFECT, TREATMENT WILL BE SOLELY UNDERTAKEN UNDER VETERINARY GUIDANCE BY PRIORITIZING THE HEALTH OF OUR CANINE FRIENDS.

SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT WITH HAPPY TAILS

THIS PROGRAM STILL RELIES ON A HANDFUL OF VOLUNTEERS; ABOVE ALL, IT RELIES ON COORDINATION WITH THE 'HAPPY TAILS' ORGANIZATION, A TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS DEDICATED TO ISSUES CONCERNING ANIMAL WELFARE AT UVA WELLASSA UNIVERSITY. IT IS THEIR EXPERIENCE AND DEDICATION THAT MADE OUR FEEDING PROGRAM POSSIBLE, WHICH WILL ALSO BE THE MAIN SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR FUTURE VACCINATION DRIVES.



HOPE FOR PAWS

BE A PART OF OUR MISSION AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

AS HUMAN BEINGS WHO ARE ATTACHED TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF LEO, WE FIRMLY BELIEVE IN EMPATHY AND SOCIAL SERVICE. OUR FEEDING PROGRAM, WHICH HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY CARRIED OUT, DEMONSTRATED THE CONSTRUCTIVE OUTCOMES ACHIEVABLE WHEN INDIVIDUALS UNITE FOR A PURPOSE. WE CALL UPON THE UVA WELLASSA UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY TO EXTEND THEIR SUPPORT FOR THIS VACCINE DRIVE AND TAKE PART IN THIS RIGHTEOUS DEED THAT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BETTER THE LIVES OF THESE CREATURES.

TOGETHER, WE ARE BUILDING A WORLD WHERE EVERY PAW OF EVERY ANIMAL REPRESENTS HOPE AND EVERY TAIL WAGS WITH HAPPINESS. WE INVITE YOU TO FOLLOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS FOR UPDATES ON THE UPCOMING VACCINATION DRIVE AND TO JOIN THIS EMOTIONALLY REWARDING EXPERIENCE!



Senehas Pawura

The Leo Club of Uva Wellassa University is pleased to present its touching initiative, "Senehas Pawura," aimed at spreading happiness among underprivileged children.

The Leo Club made headlines this month with its touching "Senahas Pawura" project, which brought smiles to the faces of underprivileged children. Let us learn more about this noble project!

"Senahas Pawura" is the Sinhala equivalent of "Wall of Fondness," which abbreviates the affection we wished to provide. We desired to provide assistance to underprivileged children while simultaneously enriching our student volunteers with an enriching sense of satisfaction. We were delighted to discover numerous UWU students who were happy to contribute back to society.

Our social media was filled with joy when we summoned volunteers, and some students volunteered their time readily.

We have not yet counted the final figures, but the smiles that we received say it all. Not only did this project benefit the children, but it also provided our Leos and fellow university students with great leadership and community service experience.

The success of "Senahas Pawura" has infused new life into our club. We have future projects lined up for continuing our mission of community service and empowering the youth.

Keep an eye out for more updates, and remember – together, we can build walls of love for those who need it most!





ക്രൂസ് ട്രാവല്സ്

ജീത നിബന്ധം മംഗലം



Minushika Shavindi
Industrial Information Technology
Degree Programme

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FRESH START 2025



A FRESH A START 2025



As the calendar flips to a new year, it brings a sense of renewal and endless possibilities. New Year resolutions are a time-honored tradition that allow us to reflect on the past and set intentions for the future. Whether it's personal growth, professional goals, or healthier habits, resolutions provide a roadmap for the year ahead.

The key to effective resolutions is making them realistic and specific. For instance, instead of saying, "I will get fit," set a goal like, "I will exercise for 30 minutes, three times a week." Breaking larger goals into smaller, achievable steps helps maintain motivation throughout the year.

It's also important to be kind to yourself during this journey. Not every resolution will go as planned, and that's okay. Growth is a process, and setbacks are opportunities to learn.

Celebrate small victories and keep moving forward. So, as we step into this new chapter, let's embrace the opportunity to grow, challenge ourselves, and create meaningful change. Remember, every day is a chance to start fresh. What will your resolutions be this year?



**HAPPY
PONGAL**

PONGAL

A HARVEST OF GRATITUDE AND PROSPERITY

Pongal is one of the most cherished harvest festivals celebrated by Tamil communities worldwide. It is dedicated to honoring nature, particularly the Sun God, for blessing the land with a bountiful harvest. Celebrated in mid-January, Pongal marks the beginning of the Tamil month "Thai," a time associated with new beginnings, abundance, and hope. Rooted in agricultural traditions, the festival reflects the deep connection between humans and nature, emphasizing gratitude and prosperity.

Pongal is significant because it serves as a moment to thank natural elements such as the Sun, rain, and soil for their contribution to agriculture. Farmers, whose livelihoods depend on these elements, see Pongal as an opportunity to express their gratitude and pray for continued prosperity. Beyond its agricultural importance, the festival fosters family and community bonds. It is a time for togetherness, renewal, and the celebration of cultural heritage.

This festival is predominantly celebrated by Tamil-speaking communities in Tamil Nadu, India, Sri Lanka, and other regions with a significant Tamil diaspora, such as Malaysia, Singapore, Mauritius, and parts of Europe and North America. It transcends religious boundaries, uniting people of different faiths and backgrounds in the Tamil tradition of gratitude and joy.

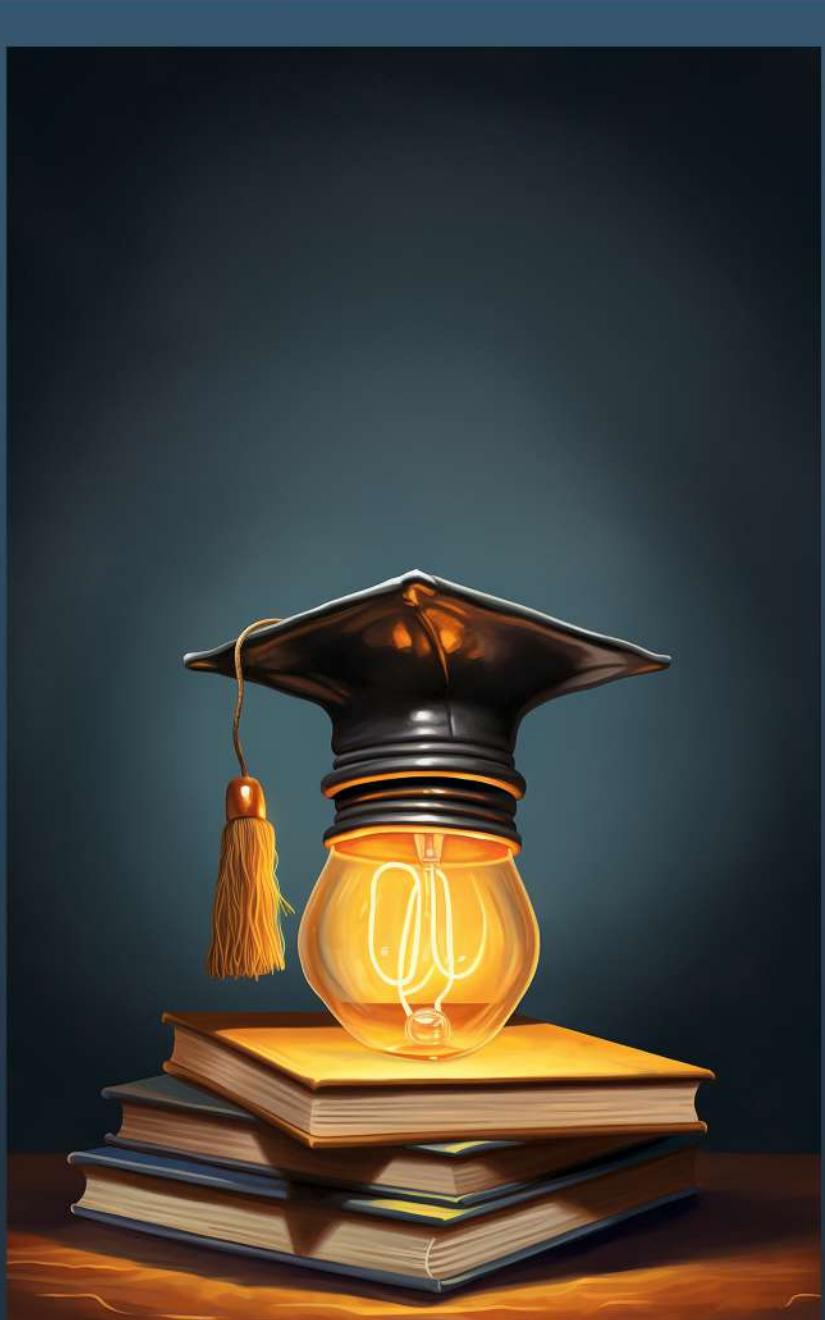
Pongal is celebrated over four days, each with unique rituals. The first day, Bhogi Pongal, is about cleansing and renewal. People clean their homes, discard old belongings, and light bonfires to symbolize the removal of negativity. The second day, Thai Pongal, is the most significant. On this day, families prepare the traditional Pongal dish using freshly harvested rice, milk, jaggery, and ghee. This dish is cooked in new clay pots and allowed to boil over, symbolizing abundance and prosperity. It is first offered to the Sun God as a gesture of gratitude, followed by prayers for blessings.

The third day, Mattu Pongal, is dedicated to cattle, which are integral to farming. Farmers bathe and decorate their cows and bulls with garlands, paint, and bells, showing their appreciation for the animals' contribution to agriculture. The final day, Kaanum Pongal, is a time for family reunions and community gatherings. People visit relatives, exchange gifts, and enjoy traditional meals, strengthening social bonds and celebrating togetherness.

Pongal is more than just a harvest festival. It is a cultural identity and a timeless celebration of Tamil heritage. The festival highlights the importance of living in harmony with nature and reminds everyone of the value of gratitude and sustainability. As it continues to be celebrated across the world, Pongal connects Tamil communities and showcases their vibrant traditions, fostering a spirit of unity and shared cultural pride.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION

JANUARY 24



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION

CELEBRATING THE POWER OF LEARNING



THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION, CELEBRATED ANNUALLY ON JANUARY 24, HIGHLIGHTS THE TRANSFORMATIVE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN FOSTERING PEACE, DEVELOPMENT, AND EQUALITY WORLDWIDE. PROCLAIMED BY THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 2018, THIS DAY UNDERSCORES THE IMPORTANCE OF INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AS A CORNERSTONE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

EDUCATION IS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT AND A DRIVER OF PROGRESS IN ALL ASPECTS OF SOCIETY. IT EMPOWERS INDIVIDUALS, REDUCES POVERTY, AND BRIDGES GAPS OF INEQUALITY. GLOBALLY, 244 MILLION CHILDREN AND YOUTH REMAIN OUT OF SCHOOL, WHILE MANY MORE LACK ACCESS TO QUALITY LEARNING RESOURCES. THE DAY SERVES AS A CALL TO ACTION FOR GOVERNMENTS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES TO ADDRESS THESE CHALLENGES AND INVEST IN EDUCATION FOR ALL.

EACH YEAR, THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF EDUCATION REVOLVES AROUND A SPECIFIC THEME TO SPOTLIGHT CRITICAL ISSUES IN EDUCATION. IT ENCOURAGES COLLABORATION AMONG NATIONS TO ACHIEVE THE UNITED NATIONS' SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4: ENSURING INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTING LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES.

ON THIS DAY, EVENTS, WORKSHOPS, AND CAMPAIGNS WORLDWIDE FOCUS ON RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION. BY CELEBRATING THIS DAY, WE RECOGNIZE EDUCATION'S POWER TO TRANSFORM LIVES AND BUILD A MORE JUST, INCLUSIVE, AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR EVERYONE.

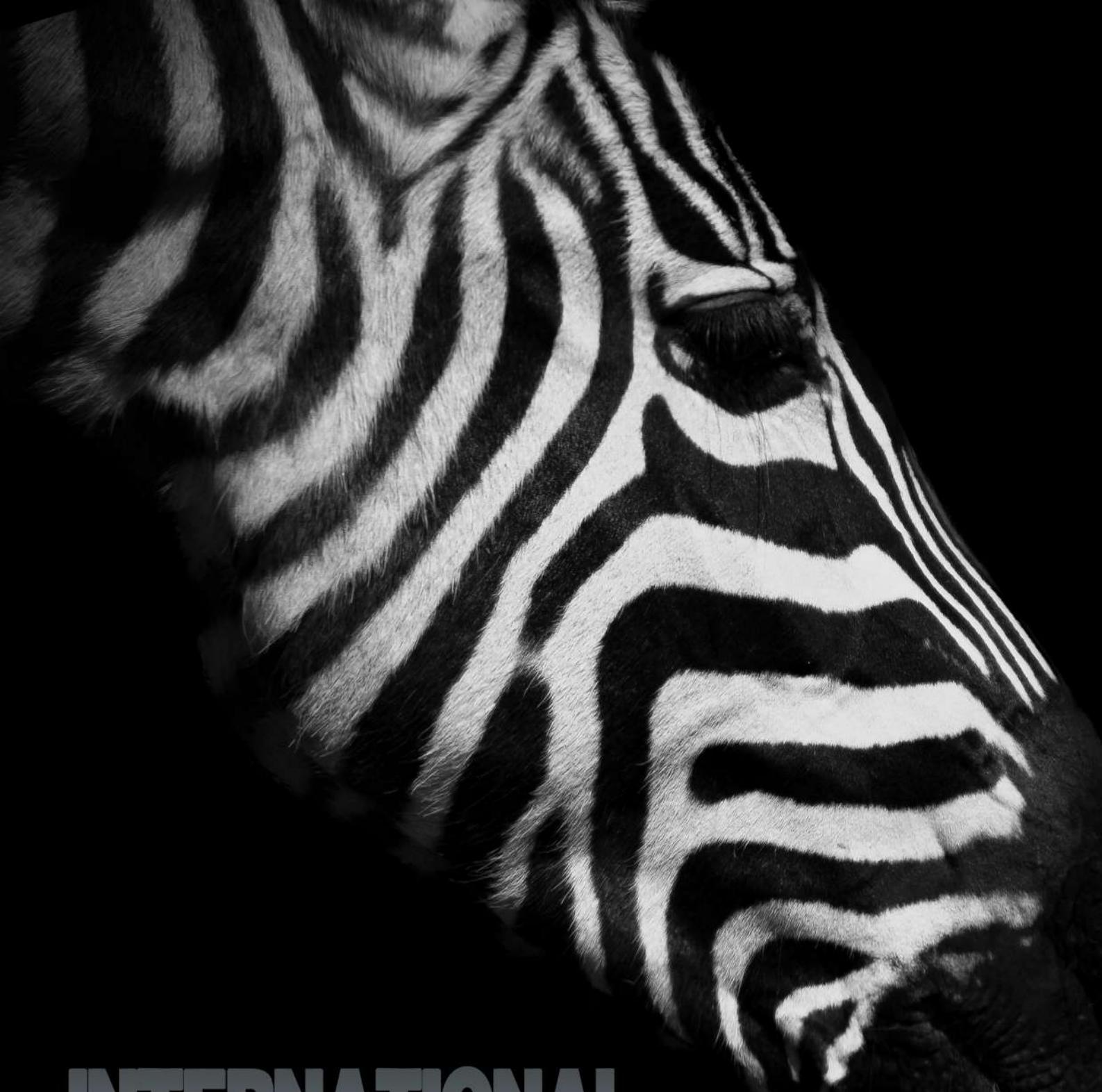
WHY OUR 'FIRSTS' ARE SO SPECIAL



FIRST EXPERIENCES IN OUR LIVES TEND TO BE UNFORGETTABLE BECAUSE THEY CARRY A SENSE OF NOVELTY, EXCITEMENT, AND EMOTIONAL SIGNIFICANCE. THE FIRST TIME WE DO SOMETHING—WHETHER IT'S MEETING A SPECIAL PERSON, ADOPTING A PET, OR TRYING SOMETHING NEW—OFTEN MARKS A MILESTONE THAT IS DEEPLY CONNECTED TO OUR EMOTIONS. THESE "FIRSTS" CREATE LASTING MEMORIES BECAUSE THEY'RE TIED TO STRONG EMOTIONS AND NEW BEGINNINGS.

FOR INSTANCE, THE FIRST TIME WE MEET A BOYFRIEND OR GIRLFRIEND, IT'S FULL OF ANTICIPATION AND EXCITEMENT. WE'RE LEARNING ABOUT SOMEONE NEW, AND OUR EMOTIONS ARE HEIGHTENED BECAUSE EVERYTHING FEELS FRESH AND SPECIAL. SIMILARLY, WHEN WE BRING HOME A DOG FOR THE FIRST TIME, IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT THE PET—it's the feeling of taking responsibility for a new life, forming a bond, and experiencing the joy of unconditional love from a little furry friend. THESE MOMENTS ARE MEMORABLE BECAUSE THEY SIGNIFY SOMETHING NEW IN OUR LIVES, AND OUR BRAINS TEND TO PRIORITIZE AND STORE THESE EVENTS BECAUSE OF THEIR EMOTIONAL IMPACT.

FIRSTS HOLD A SPECIAL PLACE IN OUR HEARTS BECAUSE THEY ARE UNIQUE AND OFFER US A SENSE OF BEGINNING, OFTEN MARKED BY CURIOSITY, JOY, AND PERSONAL MILESTONES.



**INTERNATIONAL
ZEBRA
DAY**



ZEBRA

International Zebra Day, observed annually on January 31, highlights the urgent need to protect zebras and their habitats across Africa. Known for their iconic black-and-white stripes, zebras play a vital role in maintaining ecological balance by grazing on grasses, dispersing seeds, and serving as prey for large predators. However, their survival is increasingly threatened by human activities and environmental changes. Among the three zebra species, the Grevy's zebra—found primarily in Kenya and Ethiopia—is classified as endangered by the IUCN, with fewer than 3,000 individuals remaining in the wild. Major threats include habitat loss from expanding agriculture, urban development, and livestock grazing; poaching for their skins and meat; and climate change, which disrupts water and food availability. Human-wildlife conflict further intensifies these challenges, as communities compete with zebras for dwindling land and water resources, particularly in arid regions.

Conservation efforts are critical to reversing this decline. Strategies include establishing protected wildlife reserves, enforcing anti-poaching laws, and promoting community-based initiatives that empower locals to participate in conservation while balancing livelihood needs. Education and awareness campaigns help communities understand zebras' ecological importance, while scientific research on zebra behavior and genetics informs adaptive conservation strategies. Individuals can contribute by supporting conservation organizations, advocating for policies that safeguard biodiversity, and engaging in sustainable tourism that funds protection efforts. International Zebra Day serves as a rallying call to address these challenges holistically, ensuring zebras—especially the critically endangered Grevy's zebra—continue to thrive in their natural habitats for future generations.

TOXIC RELATIONSHIPS

A SILENT STRUGGLE

Toxic relationships affect countless lives, not just romantically but also between parents and children, friends, or colleagues. These relationships drain mental and emotional well-being, often leaving individuals feeling trapped and powerless. Fear, societal pressure, and self-doubt prevent many from speaking up or stepping away, prolonging their suffering.

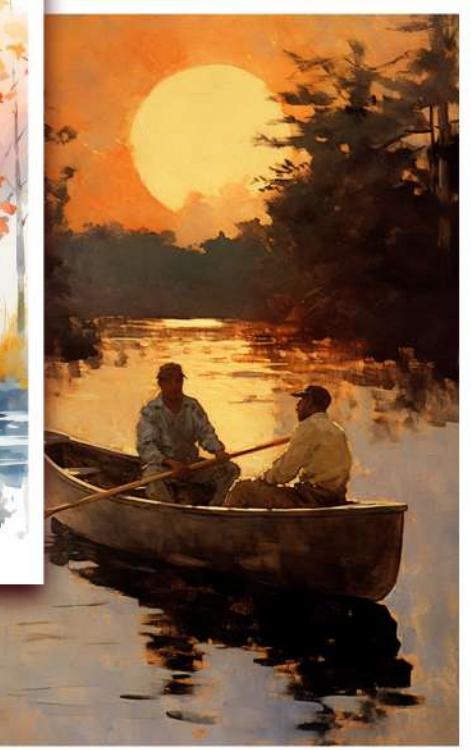
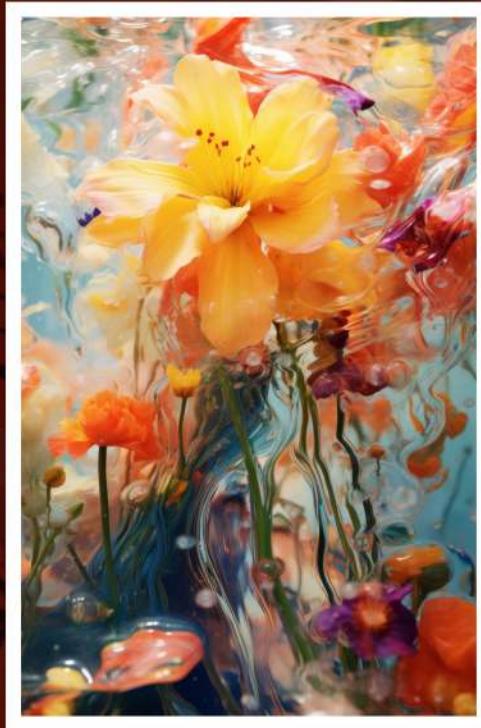
Toxicity often begins subtly, with manipulation, gaslighting, and control that erode self-esteem over time. It's seen in critical parents, manipulative friends, or hostile work environments, making it crucial to recognize and address these harmful dynamics.

Breaking free requires courage and support, whether from friends, family, or professionals. Acknowledging your worth and seeking help is the first step toward healing. Society must also foster open conversations to empower victims to take action.

Life is too precious to spend in toxic relationships. Everyone deserves love, respect, and peace—choosing to walk away is a brave step toward rediscovering happiness.



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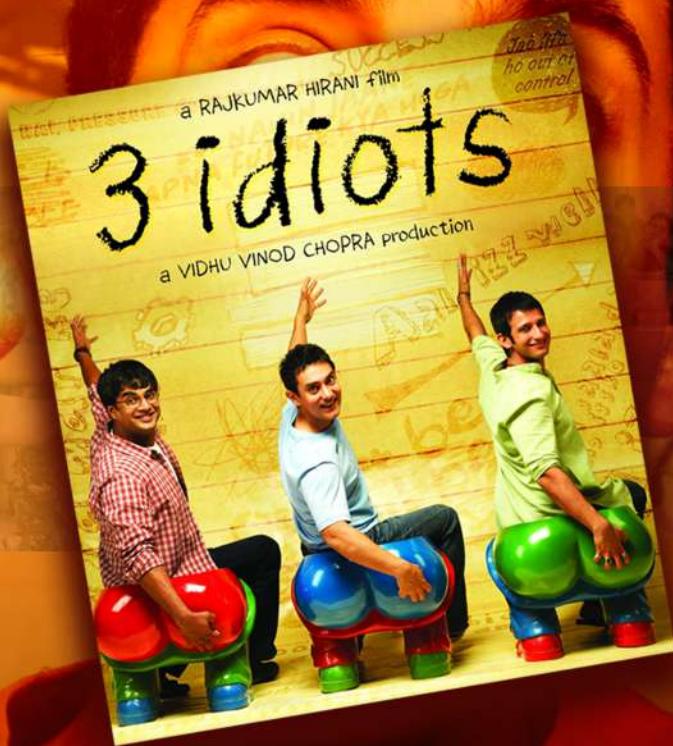
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MOVIE REVIEW

3 IDIOTS

2009

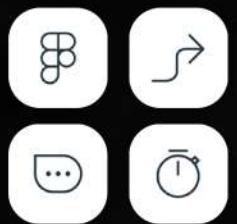


"3 IDIOTS" IS MORE THAN JUST A MOVIE; IT'S AN EMOTIONAL JOURNEY THAT RESONATES WITH AUDIENCES OF ALL AGES. DIRECTED BY RAJKUMAR HIRANI, THIS BOLLYWOOD MASTERPIECE DELIVERS A POWERFUL MESSAGE WRAPPED IN HUMOR, FRIENDSHIP, AND HEARTWARMING MOMENTS.

THE STORY REVOLVES AROUND THREE COLLEGE FRIENDS—RANCHO, FARHAN, AND RAJU—NAVIGATING THE PRESSURES OF INDIA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM. RANCHO, PLAYED BRILLIANTLY BY AAMIR KHAN, CHALLENGES CONVENTIONAL LEARNING METHODS AND INSPIRES THOSE AROUND HIM TO FOLLOW THEIR PASSION RATHER THAN SOCIETAL EXPECTATIONS. THE FILM CRITIQUES THE COMPETITIVE AND RIGID ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT WHILE EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVITY, CURIOSITY, AND JOY IN LEARNING.

THE BLEND OF COMEDY AND EMOTIONAL DEPTH KEEPS VIEWERS ENGAGED, WHILE ICONIC LINES LIKE "ALL IS WELL" LEAVE A LASTING IMPACT. THE PERFORMANCES BY THE CAST, INCLUDING R. MADHAVAN, SHARMAN JOSHI, AND BOMAN IRANI, ARE STELLAR, BRINGING AUTHENTICITY AND RELATABILITY TO THEIR CHARACTERS.

BEYOND ENTERTAINMENT, 3 IDIOTS INSPIRES US TO RETHINK OUR APPROACH TO SUCCESS AND HAPPINESS. IT'S A MUST-WATCH FOR ANYONE SEEKING LAUGHTER, TEARS, AND PROFOUND LIFE LESSONS.



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Editor's MESSAGE



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the latest edition of the Leo Club of Uva Wellassa University newsletter! As the content editor, it is my pleasure to present this collection of stories, initiatives, and achievements that highlight the remarkable efforts of our club. Over the past few months, our members have passionately dedicated themselves to serving the community and making a tangible difference in the lives of those in need.

In this issue, you'll read about our recent projects, heartwarming stories of service, and gain a glimpse into the exciting events we have planned for the future. Each article captures the enthusiasm and teamwork that drives our Leo spirit forward.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to making this edition possible. Your creativity and hard work are the backbone of this newsletter. I encourage all our members to stay engaged and keep pushing the limits of what we can achieve together.

Let's continue to lead with empathy, serve with purpose, and create lasting change.

With gratitude,

Vihini Ranasingha

Content Editor
Leo Club of Uva Wellassa University



LEO CLUB OF UWU
**SOCIAL
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LEO TIMES

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