

10Xpress

Fresh!

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Editor's Note

Greetings!

Welcome to the third issue of the 10Xpress: Volume #2! We're thrilled to introduce our brand-new design, improved from the last to enhance your reading experience.

We have put a lot of effort and thought into designing a new layout that is visually appealing and easy on the eyes. Over the past month, our staff has worked tirelessly to bring you the most engaging and diverse articles, especially since most of them were busy with examinations. With this fresh new look and exciting content, we're confident this issue will captivate you!

We would love it if you could give feedback on the newspaper, to further improve it, at the form linked [here](#).

Lastly, good luck to everyone for their half-yearly and mid-term examinations!

Warmly,
Pranav Morisetty & Bharat Ambati
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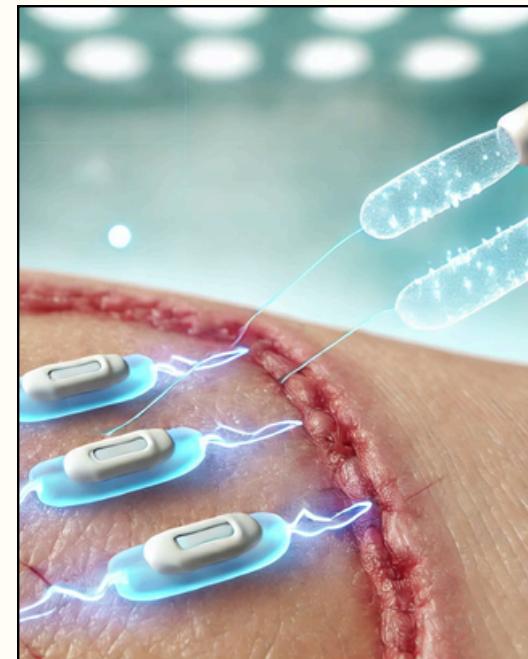
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MOST
EXCITING
ARTICLE

WRITER
OF THE
MONTH

BEST
TITLE

New electrical stitches speed up healing using muscle movement



Neil Daga, 11: Stitches date back to 3000 BCE. Spanning several civilizations worldwide, they have received a shocking upgrade. But first, what are stitches? How do they work? Can this new technology save lives?

Stitches are medical strings that wire two bodily surfaces together. They are used in cases where the skin has been punctured. But doesn't the body heal wounds on its own? In extreme cases, such as rather deep or large wounds, the body struggles to effectively heal on its own. Additionally, the wound remains wide open for bacteria to infiltrate the body, which could lead to dangerous conditions.

Stitches play a key role in this regard. Medical experts can carefully connect the gap between bodily surfaces with the help of the wire, allowing for more efficient healing and prevention of bacteria.

While this already seems like a groundbreaking medical technology, it continues to evolve. Researchers have theorized the concept of incorporating electricity into stitches. This innovation leverages the principle that electrical stimulation mimics the body's natural healing process. By triggering the opening of Na^+ and K^+ channels, it promotes cell proliferation and guides the growth of neurons, accelerating recovery.

However, traditional stitches are typically made from nylon, plastic, or silk—insulative materials that do not efficiently conduct electricity.

To address this limitation, Chinese materials scientist Chengyi Hou has proposed an innovative solution: biodegradable mechanoelectric stitches.

Composed of biodegradable polymers and magnesium, the sutures generate electricity as the middle layer of the thread rubs against the outer shell during muscle contractions or relaxation.

Tests of these sutures have shown promising results. On artificial wounds, untreated wounds shrank from 69% to 33% in 24 hours, while wounds treated with electrical stimulation shrank from 69% to just 11%.

Similarly, tests on rats showed faster recovery with the electrical sutures compared to traditional or untreated ones. If deemed safe, this material could eventually be applied to humans. Although widespread use may take time, it represents a significant advancement in medical technology.



JWST spots the first known “steam world”



Siddharth Mitra, 11: Nearly 100 light years away, an exoplanet named GJ 9827 d was discovered. This exoplanet is approximately twice the size of Earth, with an atmosphere composed entirely of water vapour, earning it the nickname “steam world.”

The idea of a planet with an atmosphere made entirely of hot vapour has been theorised by countless astronomers. However, the first evidence of such an exoplanet came from unclear data readings from the Kepler Telescope. Only recently did the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) provide a clear image of the planet alongside detailed data for analysis.

The study of GJ 9827 d was led by Caroline Piaulet-Ghorayeb at the University of Montréal’s Trottier Institute for Research on Exoplanets. The team used transmission spectroscopy to determine the planet’s atmospheric composition. This technique measures how much light is absorbed by a planet’s atmosphere, allowing astronomers to identify the gases present.

Until now, all discovered exoplanets had atmospheres of lighter elements like hydrogen and helium, making them very different from Earth. The discovery of GJ 9827 d marks a major step in exoplanet research, as it is the first exoplanet found with an atmosphere rich in heavy molecules akin to terrestrial planets.

Although astronomers have yet to identify exoplanets capable of supporting life, this discovery demonstrates that the JWST can detect large amounts of heavy gases. This capability brings us closer to finding an Earth-like planet beyond our solar system.

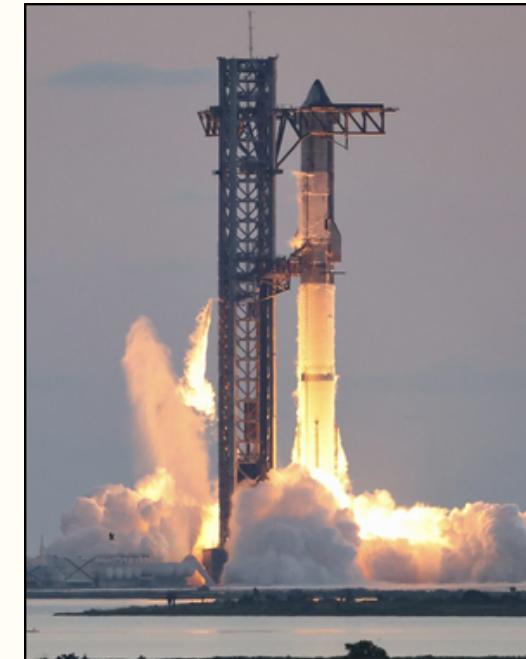
In conclusion, the discovery of GJ 9827 d represents a significant milestone in astronomy, showcasing the JWST’s ability to detect heavy gases and paving the way for revolutionary advancements in exoplanetary research.

Why SpaceX ‘Catching’ Starship Booster with Robotic Arms is a Game-Changer

Riya Kaulwar, 10: SpaceX, known for pushing the boundaries of space travel, is taking a bold step by attempting to “catch” its Starship booster with giant robotic arms: a process that could revolutionise reusable rocketry. This daring approach is not just about flashy technology; it has the potential to significantly cut launch costs and improve sustainability in the industry.

Traditionally, after propelling a spacecraft into orbit, booster rockets are either lost at sea or recovered with significant difficulty and expense. SpaceX has already changed this with its Falcon 9 rockets, which can land themselves back on Earth, drastically reducing launch costs to around \$62 million per flight, a fraction of NASA’s \$4 billion per launch for the Space Launch System (SLS). Now, with the larger, interplanetary Starship, SpaceX plans to up the ante by catching the booster right on the launch tower, using robotic arms nicknamed “Mechazilla.”

This innovation is key to SpaceX’s future goals. Elon Musk envisions that by catching the booster, the Starship could be launched, caught, and relaunched within hours, potentially achieving up to three flights per day. That estimates up to more than 1,000 launches per year, which would be revolutionary for both cost and access to space. Such frequency could drastically cut the cost per launch and allow for large-scale space missions, including Mars colonisation and rapid satellite deployment.



But catching a booster isn’t as easy as it sounds. It requires the robotic arms to coordinate with split-second accuracy as the booster descends at high speeds. If SpaceX can pull it off, this method could set a new standard in reusable rocket technology, inspiring future missions and making space more accessible than ever before. This daring move showcases SpaceX’s commitment to sustainable, rapid spaceflight and brings humanity closer to a multi-planetary future.

Forty-two U.S. States File Lawsuits Against Meta

Ruhi Beri, 11: On October 15th, a federal judge in California ruled that Meta Platforms, the parent company of Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp, must face lawsuits accusing it of inciting mental health concerns in teenagers by making their social media platforms addictive. Six days later, the attorney

generals of 33 U.S. states said Meta knowingly perpetuated addictive and compulsive social media use in young children and adolescents, and eight other states and Washington D.C. filed similar lawsuits against the company.

With a total of 42 out of 50 U.S. states



formulating complaints and lawsuits against Meta for provoking social media addiction and fomenting mental health concerns, the possibility of laws and regulations that will hold companies accountable for deliberately creating addictive or psychologically harmful platforms is becoming more likely.

Since the public access debut of Facebook in 2006, eighteen years ago, social media has been a large part of the average internet user’s life, with a plethora of research, indicating that it is, in its current state, bad for mental health and addictive. However, current U.S. federal social media laws primarily address privacy and data collection—which, though important to have, do not account for the psychological effects of social media use.

Globally, some nations are starting to pass bills upholding online safety, especially for young users. One example is the UK’s 2023 Online Safety Act: it requires platforms to prevent children from viewing harmful and inappropriate content and give adults more control over the content they consume. The act also introduces new criminal offences such as encouraging or assisting self-harm, intimate image abuse, and spreading misinformation on social media platforms.

Microsoft Copilot Enhancements: Autonomous AI Agents

Yi Zou, 10: On 21st October, Microsoft announced the expansion of its Copilot AI platform, introducing new autonomous agents aimed at transforming how businesses handle operations like sales, customer service, and supply chain management. They are planned to be released in November and can help streamline tasks, offer assistance with business processes, and even promote full-scale automation.

The announcement, made by CEO Satya Nadella on X, mentioned the public preview of Copilot Studio's autonomous agents, set to roll out next month. Using the new autonomous agents from Copilot, businesses will soon be able to build and manage AI tools that are specifically tailored to their needs. This, in turn, is likely to leverage Microsoft's existing data platforms like Microsoft 365 Graph and Dataverse.

One may ask what makes this update special. In essence, Microsoft is introducing ten new agents within Dynamics 365, each with specific functions. For example, the Sales Qualification Agent automates outreach, while the Supplier Communications Agent helps in supply chain operations. Other agents focus on improving customer service through various autonomous features. Microsoft has also considered security and governance in this expansion. The new tools include data protection features like loss prevention and authentication protocols, all manageable by IT teams.



This update shows Microsoft's role as a leader in AI-driven business solutions. Whether it's automating tasks or enhancing customer interactions, the Copilot platform is setting a new standard for AI in the workplace.

AI Update: Claude 3.5 now available on Perplexity AI

An advertisement for Perplexity AI. The top half of the image shows a dramatic sunset or sunrise over a coastal landscape with hills and a winding path. The word "perplexity" is written in large, white, lowercase letters across the upper portion of the scene. Above the word, the text "AVAILABLE ON" is visible. The bottom right corner features the text "ALL-NEW Claude 3.5 Sonnet" in large white letters, with "by ANTHROPIC" in smaller text below it. The Perplexity logo, a stylized four-pointed star or asterisk, is located in the bottom left corner. At the very bottom right, the URL "perplexity.com/pro" is written in small white text.

Goldman Sachs' decision to dissolve its collaboration with Apple

Suchita Agarwalla, 11: The financial technology industry experiences a major shift as Goldman Sachs, a major investment banking firm, has decided to discontinue its partnership with Apple on the Apple Card program. Apple Card is a credit card created by Apple Inc. and issued by Goldman Sachs; it is primarily intended for use with Apple Pay on all Apple devices.

Apple Card, currently available only in the US, has 12 million cardholders as of early 2024. But if the card is such a success, then why is the partnership ending after such a short 5 year run? When it first launched, the card promised to be a consumer-friendly product with transparency, no fees, and interest-free financing on Apple products. The main problem arose when Goldman received "more disputes than it counted on" and struggled to manage the immense rise in activity. A dispute is when a customer files a chargeback against a transaction, either because it was fraudulent, unauthorised, or because the goods or services were not as described. Companies were also accused of false advertising because, contrary to expectations, many cardholders who were supposed to be automatically registered were instead charged interest on Apple purchases.

The partnership between Apple and Goldman was plagued by issues that impacted customers and led to mounting scrutiny from regulators. Their consumers faced long waits to get money back for disputed charges, and some had incorrect negative information added to their credit reports.



The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) recently imposed a \$89 million fine on the two companies.

The Apple Card, originally seen as an entry into consumer finance for Goldman Sachs, has now become a liability for them. They have also been banned from launching a new credit card unless they provide "a credible plan" that the product will comply with the law. Therefore, for Goldman Sachs, this dissolution marks a retreat from consumer banking, allowing the bank to prioritise its other strengths in asset and wealth management while Apple seeks other banking partners who might be able to better handle the demands of its customer base.

IndiGo's Strategic Shift: Entering the Business Class Market

Avani Radheshyam, 11: IndiGo plans to launch business class on its busiest routes by year-end and important details were announced on its 18th anniversary in August. While a move was largely expected by analysts, the piecemeal approach to an announcement was not. Once synonymous with low-cost travel,

IndiGo has now moved over to premium services, promoting itself as "affordable" as it looks to compete with Tata group airlines like Air India and Vistara, which currently control India's business class market.

The data from Cirium showed India now



has 7,032 weekly business class seats, much lower than the 15,564 available in December 2018 when Jet Airways was an active airline. Indigo seems to want to fill the gap created by the collapse of Jet Airways last year.

IndiGo has not published a configuration for business class. European airlines tend to use standard seats with middle seats blocked off, while U.S. low-cost carriers like JetBlue offer full business-class seats. It is also unclear whether it will take IndiGo into shorter segments on routes like Bengaluru to Hyderabad and Bengaluru to Chennai.

IndiGo's decision comes as Tata group airlines are strengthening market presence to challenge IndiGo's

domination. However, IndiGo is expanding in business class and loyalty programs to maintain its strong share in the market and profitability. While competition toughens, market share and profitability will be good indicators of the level of success, and, so far, IndiGo leads on both counts.

North Korea: Deployment of Troops in Russia Aligns with International Law

Sanvi Kurade, 10: Reports from South Korean intelligence and Western defense analysts, including the Korean Institute for Defense Analyses (KIDA) and the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), suggest that North Korea may have deployed over 3,000 troops to Russia in potential support of the ongoing Russo-Ukraine conflict. North Korean officials have stated that any military cooperation would be "by international law," though these claims have drawn varied responses from global powers.

From Ukraine's perspective, foreign support for Russia signifies an unwelcome escalation. Kyiv has called on international bodies, including the United Nations, to take action, arguing that external involvement threatens its sovereignty. Ukrainian leaders view the reports as a sign of Russia's deepening need for external support, as the conflict continues.

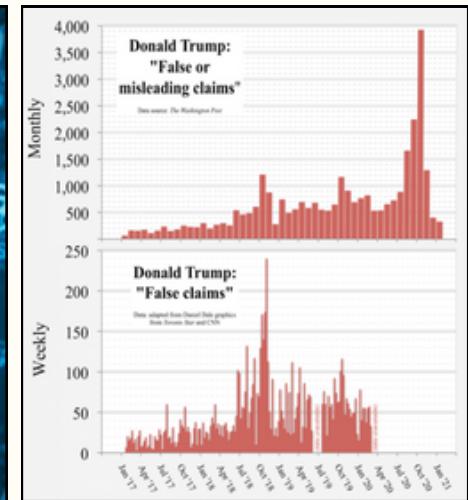
North Korea, meanwhile, justifies its potential assistance by emphasizing its right to support Russia as an ally, portraying this relationship as one of mutual defense. North Korean state media frequently describe Russia as a partner, citing shared goals in resisting NATO-aligned nations. Pyongyang maintains that such actions align with international norms, though it has not confirmed specific troop movements.

In Russia, officials have neither confirmed nor denied North Korea's involvement. State media have used terms like "labor and logistical support" from allies, which some analysts believe is a way to



highlight Russia's wider partnerships. This language may serve to show resilience and cooperation with nations outside the Western sphere.

The United States has expressed concern over any significant involvement from North Korea, viewing it as a potential destabilizer in a region already under strain. U.S. officials have indicated that increased support for Russia could prompt further sanctions against North Korea and additional aid for Ukraine.



Donald Trump and the Politics of Misinformation

Syshasri Raghavan, 10: During and after his term as President of the United States, Donald J. Trump made thousands of false or misleading claims, and it is not a surprise that the same acts are being repeated for this year's presidential candidates. Both Donald Trump and Kamala Harris have rallied across multiple states to spread encouragement for their presidency.

The presidential debate between Trump and Harris went viral internationally after Donald Trump stated, "In Springfield, they are eating the dogs. The people that came in, they are eating the cats. They're eating – they are eating the pets of the people that live there." Despite ongoing controversies surrounding his use of misinformation, Donald J. Trump emerged victorious in the 2024 United States presidential election.

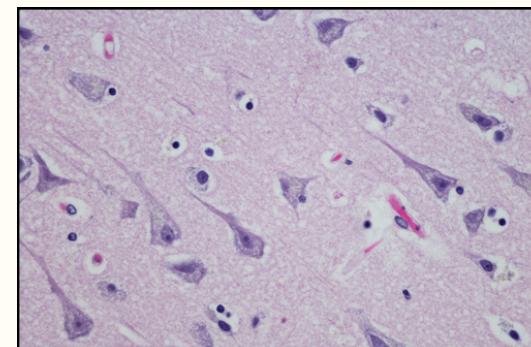
Throughout his campaign, Trump continued a familiar strategy: utilizing provocative statements and making claims that often stretched or contradicted verified facts. This approach led to criticism from opponents and fact-checking organizations, who frequently highlighted inaccuracies and misinformation in his statements. However, this is not to undermine Trump's political campaign, as his rival, Kamala Harris, has often employed the same strategies in her speeches, such as her visions for tariffs and funding for the Russia-Ukraine war.

Social media played a large role in increasing Trump's messages, allowing the rapid spread of both accurate and misleading information alike. It is important to recognize the role of such platforms in spreading disinformation that may not have come from the perceived speaker.

Ultimately, Trump's victory in 2024 reflects a complex merge of media skepticism and the power of setting a narrative for one's followers. By creating a perception of himself as the people's champion, Trump capitalized on a campaign that is divided on sources of truth. Whether or not his use of misinformation will impact his ability to govern effectively remains to be seen.

Scientists discover microplastics in human brain tissue

Shresta Morisetty, 9: Scientists in Brazil recently discovered microplastics in the brain tissue of cadavers, according to a study published in JAMA Network Open. In recent years, studies have found these ubiquitous microplastics throughout the human body—in the blood, lungs, and placenta. A primary concern for scientists has been whether these pollutants can reach the human brain.



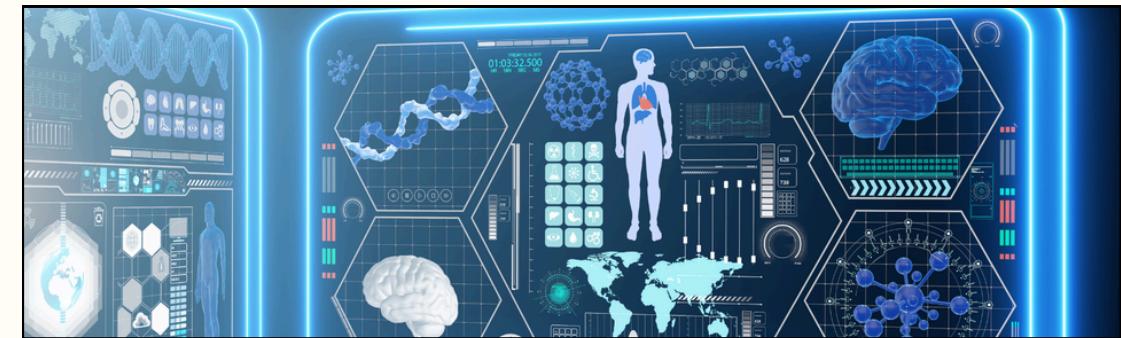
In this study, Mauad and her team examined samples of olfactory brain tissue from 15 cadavers of people who died between the ages of 33 and 100. Microplastics, tiny plastic fragments less than five millimetres long, were detected in the olfactory bulbs of 8 individuals. Olfactory bulbs identify and process smells and odours, passing on information from the nose to the brain. The most common type of microplastic detected was polypropylene, used in clothes, furniture, rugs, packaging, and more.

These findings raise concerns that the olfactory pathways may act as a potential entry route for microplastics into areas of the brain beyond the olfactory bulb. Study co-author Luís Fernando Amato-Lourenço explains, “Once present in [the olfactory bulb], there can be translocation to other regions of the brain,” emphasizing the need for further research on microplastics’ effects on human health.

The effects of microplastics on the body are mostly unknown, but some studies show they may be harmful. For example, a study earlier this year found a connection between microplastics in human

arteries and a higher risk of heart disease. In the case of the brain, there may be an increased risk for neurodegenerative diseases due to exposure. The authors mention that some microplastics are associated with particulate matter, which can contribute to dementia and developmental issues.

So, how can we reduce our exposure to microplastics? People can be exposed to microplastics by just drinking water, eating food, and breathing air. Individuals can reduce exposure by avoiding microwaving in plastic, using fewer plastic containers, and keeping plastic out of dishwashers to prevent leaching.



The Rise of Telemedicine and its Impact on Healthcare Accessibility



Avantika Singh, 10: Telemedicine has revolutionized access to healthcare services and brought it closer to the patient than ever. This new concept depends on the advancement of technology whereby consultations, diagnostic evaluations, and treatment provided by a healthcare professional are done through video calls, telephone conversations, or specific Web portals. The transition restructured not only the mode of delivery of healthcare but also increased access to quality medical care for people in underserved and rural areas.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the use of telemedicine by a long stride-forward movement, with high patient loads in hospitals and clinics, coupled with the need for maintaining social distance. In this scenario, telemedicine has turned out to be a lifeline for many patients, especially those suffering from chronic ailments or facing mobility issues. Various studies have identified that telemedicine decreases in-person visits by 60%, with its good scope for common ailments and conducting mental health counseling, along with routine follow-ups. It will also reduce emergencies needing to get through the emergency rooms for minor cases, allowing efficient use of the resources for critical conditions.

The first major advantage of telemedicine is that it cuts down geographical barriers. Patients who stay far from city centers and have to travel just to reach a specialist for consultation can, nowadays, do so from home. This improvement has been felt more markedly in fields such as mental health, dermatology, and internal medicine. Telemedicine supports the elderly patient and those with disabilities, making healthcare more inclusive.

However, telemedicine also has its own set of challenges. With limited internet access and technology literacy in the low-income population and elderly, the reach of telemedicine is limited. Other concerns are related to privacy and data security since patient information would flow across digital networks. Ensuring secure platforms and dealing with regulatory issues will be the result of increased demand with increased telemedicine. But no matter the challenge, telemedicine is proving a real tool of modern healthcare both access and convenience. With increased advancement in technology and availability, telemedicine may bridge these health gaps by offering quality medical services to more people around the world. With further development and protection through regulations, telemedicine stands to become a cornerstone in an increasingly connected and accessible healthcare system.

P. Diddy predicted arrest for his 'intimidating' parties and scandals

Venkat Raghav M., 11: Sean 'Diddy' Combs, once celebrated as the party king and famous for his exclusive White Parties in the Hamptons, is now facing scrutiny for accusations of sexual abuse at his events; this sparked broader investigations into his behaviour.

At the peak of his fame, Diddy's parties were seen as the ultimate symbol of prestige. High-profile celebrities like Justin Bieber, Mariah Carey, Paris Hilton, Jennifer Lopez, Jay-Z, and Beyoncé attended his events. Some even chose his parties to unveil new music. However, these high-profile gatherings were not without controversy. Over time, rumours of inappropriate and questionable conduct at his parties began to surface, growing louder as his events became more popular.

In an interview with Vibe magazine, Diddy acknowledged the criticism and resistance that he faced, stating: "They won't even give me a permit for the parties no more. They don't want me to throw the parties no more, but we ain't gonna stop. We gonna keep on having fun bringing people together from all walks of life..." He also remarked, "You're gonna hear about my parties. They're gonna be shutting them down. They're gonna probably be arresting me, doing all types of crazy things just 'cause we wanna have a good time."

In mid-September 2024, Diddy was arrested and charged with serious crimes, including racketeering conspiracy,

sex trafficking, and transportation for purposes of prostitution. He has pleaded not guilty to all charges. Currently, he is detained without bail at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, New York, awaiting trial in May 2025.



Liam Payne: A Legacy Remembered



Tisha Sehrawat, 10: The recent passing of Liam Payne on October 16, 2024, has sent shockwaves through the music world, leaving fans heartbroken. As a member of the iconic boy band One Direction, Liam's contributions shaped the soundtrack of many childhoods. His hits, such as "What Makes You Beautiful" and "Midnight Memories," resonated with millions, making him a beloved figure. According to reports, Liam fell from a hotel balcony while under the influence of substances, with "pink cocaine" and alcohol found in his system.

An outpouring of grief flooded social media from his former bandmates, who sent condolences and memories of the time they spent together following the news of his death. Niall Horan, Harry Styles, and Louis Tomlinson said they were "heartbroken" and spoke about how much they loved the close bond they had throughout their careers. The struggles Liam faced have a resounding impact not only on those who grew up with the music but also on the generations of artists to come who will be influenced by his work. For many, the songs of Liam were not mere entertainment but moments of joy and nostalgia. Some of these songs that encapsulated youth, love, and heartache were "Summer Love" and "What a Feeling." The lyrics would encapsulate the emotions of the generation, and his fans would try to find their way through his melodies.

In the end, the legacy of Liam Payne will live on through his songs and the memories they created for fans all around the world. Remember we are still in celebration of his memory while also taking a step to consider the level to which mental health support could assist these artists during periods of fame pressures. As sobering as it sounds, Liam's journey is a reminder of what a lifestyle in addiction might do, but more so, it provokes one to bring attention and care to this entertainment industry so help for such artists might be brought forward. While the music fades away, the impact of an artist's life lasts much longer.

Balancing ambitions and well-being

Veda Sharma, 10: Let us be honest: the world today feels like a never-ending race. With phones buzzing and to-do lists growing every single day, we tend to forget what matters most—our mental health. What if we could chase our dreams without completely wearing out our bodies?

POV: You are at your desk, smashing through tasks, feeling on top of the world. But then that rush turns into a wave of anxiety, and suddenly, you are questioning whether all this hustle is worth it. The good news? Productivity does not have to mean sacrificing your well-being.

Start by thinking about what productivity means for you. It is not just about checking off a long list of tasks; it is about what truly makes a difference in your life. Prioritizing your tasks can make a big impact. Using the Eisenhower Matrix can help you distinguish between what is urgent and what is important. You might realize that some of the things causing you stress aren't as important as you think they are.

And, of course, breaks. Seriously, they can make all the difference. Whether you take a quick walk outside, get some fresh air, or just sit and stare into space, these little breaks recharge your brain and present new ideas. A few minutes of meditation or writing down your thoughts can help you feel more centred when the world feels chaotic.

It is fine to say no sometimes. Setting boundaries is crucial. Embrace the concept of "slow productivity."

Focus on doing things well rather than doing more. You don't have to be superhuman—you just need to be you. So let's flip that script. Juggling your passions with your well-being isn't some lofty, unattainable notion; it's essential. Your mental health will take you to your dreams and help you achieve them in a way that feels fulfilling. Because, by the way, you deserve to chase your passions without losing yourself along the way.



How to ace your midterms

Dia Rautela, 10: I warmly welcome you to another stressful, sweat-inducing, and superbly intense season of midterms. Whether it's your third, fourth, or fifth year in these real-life Hunger Games, everyone knows this is a time of late-night study sessions, early-morning drills, and back-breaking days at school. But beware—only the most resilient will receive the sweet satisfaction of an excellent score.

But how can one achieve that sought-after perfect mark sheet to impress parents, boast to friends, and showcase to future college admissions officers? Be warned: it is no ordinary feat. Yet, it is quite simple. First things first, all you need is a plan. Yes, you heard right—four letters, one syllable, but a guaranteed ticket to what you desire most. However, what you put in this plan is critical.

Creating the perfect study schedule:

- Prioritise the subjects you struggle with most. Allot larger time blocks for those subjects, so you can spend time clearing doubts and strengthening concepts.
- Simplify your study sessions. Break down your portions into topics and sub-topics, and use one study session to work on one topic to ensure proper focus on important information.
- Allot specific times each day in the week when you are free, and utilise this time to study a specific subject/subtopic. Write down a timetable (similar to a school one), where you make blocks for each subject you want to study. For example, between 06:30-08:30, you will study biology, and from 09:00-10:00, you will study mathematics.

- Pomodoro technique: It is an effective way of studying for those who have fickle attention spans. The timer makes you study for twenty-five minutes and rest for five minutes, which increases productivity and motivation.
- Effective Studying Techniques: Use flashcards (on Quizlet), create mindmaps, study with friends, write down a list of your weak areas, and do mock papers/practice questions.

Important things to consider:

- Pay attention to your health. Make sure you sleep well, eat well, and ensure that you are hydrated and physically well. Not only does this guarantee your well-being, but it results in more productivity, motivation, and better scores.
- Avoid cramming. It is not an effective form of studying, and it will only result in short-term memory of your portions. If you use the more useful study methods (mentioned above), it will result in better scores.

Midterms don't seem so daunting now, do they? Following these simple steps will get you the scores you deserve, but it's important to consider your hard work and acknowledge that you are trying your best. Regardless of your score, always remember that you put in the effort, and you'll continue to improve.

May the odds ever be in your favour.
(credit: Hunger Games)

Silver Medal at the Archery World Cup Final



Krishiv Thummalapalli, 11: Deepika Kumari is a 30-year-old professional Indian archer who secured a silver medal in the recently held 2024 Archery World Cup Final. The event took place in Tlaxcala, Mexico, in which one of the best archers from around the world participated. Deepika entered the finals after a series of outstanding performances throughout every round. Deepika has played significantly in the earlier rounds, overpowering the top-ranked archers from around the world. Deepika has played every round with determination and precision despite the challenging conditions and high stakes of the World Cup final.

During the rounds, Deepika displayed remarkable skill and composure. She effortlessly defeated Yang Xiaolei, a previous Olympic silver medalist, in the quarter-finals with a commanding score of 6-0. Following this, Deepika edged out a victory against Alejandra Valencia, a renowned Mexican Olympic archer, with a close score of 6-4 in the semi-finals. However, in the final round, Deepika faced Li Jiaman, a Chinese archer and recent silver medalist from the 2024 Olympics. Despite her efforts, Deepika was defeated with a score of 6-0, securing a comfortable win for Li Jiaman.

Despite winning the silver medal, which is a huge achievement reflecting her years of practice and dedication, Deepika Kumari continues to inspire many archers in India. Her success at the World Cup serves as a stepping stone, fueling her dreams for future competitions and strengthening her resolve to secure a gold medal next time.

This silver medal is not just a victory but a testament to her exceptional talent and unwavering commitment to the sport of archery.



The Ballon d'Or



Aarush Kommunuri, 11: The Ballon d'Or, the most coveted individual award in football, has long been a stage for legends like Messi and Ronaldo for the past 2 decades. However, the 2024 Ballon d'Or ceremony at Paris' Châtelet Theatre on October 28 marked a turning point, igniting a new era in football. The night was filled with history-making moments, fiery debates, and the birth of rising stars who will shape the next generation of football.

Rodri's win at the 2024 Ballon d'Or marked a defining moment for the Manchester City midfielder, but it wasn't without controversy. Many argued that runner-up Vinícius Júnior was robbed of the award, citing his remarkable offensive season and even accusing racism. But when you look at Rodri's performances, it's hard to argue he didn't deserve it. He played a pivotal role in Spain's triumph at Euro 2024, where his command, as well as his control over the game, was invaluable for the team. Rodri's performance in the Premier League for Manchester City was equally impressive, helping secure the Premier League title, UEFA Super Cup, and Club World Cup. He was imperative both defensively and offensively, with City conceding 0.9 goals per game with him on the pitch, while their attack averaged 2.7 goals with him.

While his influence on the pitch was undeniable, he wasn't the only standout player in 2024. Lamine Yamal's meteoric rise earned him the title of the youngest-ever Kopa Trophy winner, recognizing the best young talent in football. At just 16, his showstopping skills, blistering pace, incredible dribbling, and sharp vision captivated fans across Europe.

Aitana Bonmatí won her second Ballon d'Or Féminin in 2024 after playing a crucial role in Spain's Women's World Cup victory. Other notable winners included Harry Kane and Kylian Mbappé, who shared the Gerd Müller Award for scoring the most goals in a season (52). Emiliano Martínez claimed the Yashin Award, while Carlo Ancelotti and Emma Hayes were named Coaches of the Year. The 2024 Ballon d'Or ceremony celebrated individual brilliance and team excellence while highlighting the exceptional talent shaping the future of football.



Fleabag by Phoebe Waller-Bridge



Saachee Moholkar, 12: Fleabag is a satirical, real, and heart-tugging story that follows the journey of a woman coping with the death of her best friend. Her character known only as "Fleabag" is known for her witty offside remarks and confessions to the camera, creating a unique intimacy between the viewers and her character. The author, Phoebe Waller-Bridge's writing is extremely candid and perfectly encapsulates the messy nature of grief, desire, and pity.

One of the central points of the show is her dysfunctional relationship with her family. From her evasive and passive dad to her anxious ex-boyfriend, this show constantly uses dark humour and dialogue to add realism to the characters and intrigue its viewers.

In Season 1 of the show, the audience is met with an unapologetic character as she navigates her life, having lost her best friend, who happens to be the co-owner of a cafe they run together. We are introduced to her cynical stepmother, whose main goal is to create a rift between Fleabag and her father. We are introduced to her insecure, peevish sister, who has only started talking again after years of altercations.

In Season 2, the same self-destructive, comical Fleabag starts to embrace her imperfections and even start a romance with someone. Her relationships, which were once considered unfixable, are slowly but surely being confronted and accepted.

What sets this show apart is Waller-Bridge's balance between tragedy

and satire. And she brings a nuanced female character rarely seen on screen, without trying to romanticize or glamourise her life. This is one of my favorite shows as each episode unfolds Fleabag is a way that makes you want to delve into her mind even more.



"A Series of Unfortunate Events" by Lemony Snicket



Maanika S Gupta, 10: If you're feeling a little odd yet still want some element of sadness with the entertainment, then A Series of Unfortunate Events by Netflix is the right choice. Based on the well-known children's novels by Lemony Snicket (aka Daniel Handler), this show gives its wildest hats off to the Baudelaire trio of orphans - Violet, Klaus, and Sunny - who have to endure the troubles of this world with the most evil adults.

In the very first frame, you are right in the middle of the mess that is the Baudelaires' existence. Following the unfortunate death of their parents in a certain fire (yes, it is that tragic), the three kids are sent to the care of their dastardly guardian Count Olaf, a delightfully manic character portrayed by Neil Patrick Harris. Harris rises to the occasion of the larger-than-life and extremely camp villain by making Olaf extremely funny when he is also extremely scary or at least frighteningly ridiculous. You are mesmerized by the character, pinned in position as you anticipate his next ludicrous escapade.

What I struggle to cope with in watching this series is the dark comedy 'relief' from all these horrific problems that the characters face. The opening credits provide the best illustration: a catchy little song that warns you of the impending catastrophes and, ironically, makes you want to laugh. It is this strange combination of humour and discomfort that makes you watch more of the show, even if you are all empathetic towards the Baudelaires who cannot seem to get a single good thing happening to them.

Another thing that stands out in this series is the animation.

Each episode appears like it has been lifted from a certain storybook, with very elaborate set designs along with costumes that fit the gothic nature of the film. It really immerses one in Snicket's odd world bearing in mind the burdens of the orphans and the eccentricities of the people surrounding them.

On all counts, A Series of Unfortunate Events is a narrative that translates resilience. The Baudelaires, having worst-dealt cards, show how shrewd and creative they can be. Violet's odd inventions, Klaus's mental sharpness, and Sunny's attitude all drive to show that there is some ray of creativity and hope even when all seems lost. It's a great suggestion that even in the darkest of places, there would be a flicker of light.

Over the course of three seasons, the series makes an impact on the audience by moving with the books, the replay features being the relations between characters. There are colour characters, who among other things, help the Baudelaires in achieving their goals, including quite dopey Mr Poe.

As a whole, A Series of Unfortunate Events is an engaging compendium of emotional experiences that confines fun within tragedy. The show bears strong performances, exquisite graphics, and an immersive style of storytelling which makes it a relatable show to all age groups. So, get ready with some popcorn and get into a linear narrative that has more twists and turns of unfortunate events than you can ever imagine. Trust me, I promise it will be worth it!

General Arjun Ray's talk and Diwali Mufti Day

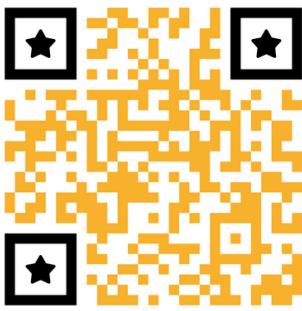
Advaith Datta Reddy Palam, 10: Our school recently held two meaningful events—Mufti Day and a talk by General Ray on Genius Day. Each event brought a unique focus: Mufti Day celebrated cultural diversity and giving back, while General Ray's talk on Genius Day challenged us to find our personal "ism" and higher purpose.

Mufti Day was an exciting celebration of our school's diversity and altruism. We arrived in traditional clothing instead of our uniforms, bringing brilliant colours and displays of ethnic pride to the school. Seeing students embrace their ancestry was encouraging; each ensemble served as a reminder of the diverse backgrounds that comprise our school community. There was more to Mufti Day than just the clothes. We all contributed to a worthy cause, which gave us a chance to consider how important it is to give back. The day took on greater significance when we realised that our contributions would have a beneficial effect. It served as a reminder that community is about more than just being together; it's also about helping one another and striving for the common good.

A few days before Mufti Day, we gathered for a talk by General Ray on the purpose of Genius Day. This wasn't just any lecture—it was a conversation about understanding what drives us. General Ray spoke to us about the idea of our "ism," a personal philosophy or guiding purpose that brings clarity and direction to our lives. He explained that everyone has an "ism," even if they haven't discovered it yet. This "ism" could be anything from environmentalism to compassionism, as long as it's something that resonates deeply and inspires us to be better. The talk encouraged us to look inward and consider what wakes us up each morning. General Ray shared how identifying and embracing our personal "ism" can help us make intentional choices and live with purpose. He emphasised that our "ism" is a compass, pointing us toward actions and decisions that align with our values. He also shared practical advice on how to use this purpose productively, turning our ideas and passions into contributions that positively impact others. For many of us, it was a powerful reminder that our ambitions can be meaningful, not just for personal success but also for the betterment of those around us.

All in all, this month truly held a lot in store for us, making us truly reflect towards what drives us, and the change we could make through small donations and actions. The talk along with Mufti Day were experiences that reinforced the belief that our time in school is more than academics—it's about finding our purpose, giving back, and building a foundation for a meaningful life ahead.





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