

10Xpress

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Editor's Note

Greetings!

As we step into the new year, our team is thrilled to bring you the fourth issue of 10xpress, packed with insightful stories, fresh perspectives, and coverage of recent events—both global and local. Like always, we'll be diving into key happenings around the world while also shining a spotlight on important milestones within our own school community.

Your feedback is invaluable to us! If you have thoughts on this issue or suggestions for improvement, we'd love to hear from you. You can share your input through the feedback form linked [here](#).

Interested in joining the 10xpress team? Feel free to reach out to me at bharat.ambati@10xinternationalschool.com.

Happy reading!

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MOST
EXCITING
ARTICLE

WRITER
OF THE
MONTH

BEST
TITLE

New Nicotine Pouches: Innovation or Issue?



Source: BBC

Yi Zou, 10: ZYN, a leading brand of flavoured nicotine pouches, secured FDA authorization on January 16th, sparking a global debate about its potential impact on public health. Marketed as a safer alternative to traditional tobacco and vaping products, ZYN claims to reduce smoking-related harms and carcinogen exposure; meanwhile, critics warn of the possible rise in oral nicotine use.

Nicotine pouches, small flavoured packets placed between the gums and lips, offer a tobacco-free experience in flavours such as cinnamon, citrus, coffee, menthol, and spearmint. While they do not contain tobacco, they comprise nicotine: the stimulant responsible for the buzz associated with smoking.

Originally introduced to the U.S. market in 2014, ZYN's manufacturer, Swedish Match, applied for FDA authorization in 2020. After four years of scrutiny, the FDA concluded the pouches provide a net public health benefit, a decision Mary Hrywna, associate professor at Rutgers School of Public Health, said reflects the reduced risks compared to traditional tobacco.

Of course, the absence of tobacco in these pouches eliminates many carcinogens found in cigarettes and similar products, drawing parallels to the harm reduction strategies of e-cigarettes. This has been hailed as a step forward in minimizing smoking-related health issues. Nonetheless, the authorization does not equate to safety.

However, Nicotine, a highly addictive stimulant, carries its health risks by itself. For adolescents, nicotine exposure can hinder brain development and increase addiction vulnerability. Despite age restrictions on nicotine sales in many countries, underage use remains a pressing concern. The discreet nature of these pouches—small, portable, and disposable—could exacerbate usage among teens, raising alarms about their impact on schools and youth communities.

While ZYN and similar products may mitigate some risks associated with smoking, experts emphasize that nicotine use in any form is not without harm. Public health advocates urge individuals, particularly young people, to avoid nicotine products entirely, highlighting that no product can make smoking “safe.” The debate underscores the ongoing challenge of balancing harm reduction with the prevention of new public health risks.



Source: National Audubon Society

Enzyme Changes Behind Parrot Plumage Colors



Siddharth Mitra, 11: Parrot feathers sport a diverse set of colours with yellow, orange, red, and green pigments made possible only by substances known as psittacofulvins. Blue hues come from nanostructures on feathers, often appearing green when combined with yellow psittacofulvin, and the amount of black pigment is controlled by melanin.

Until now the shift in shades of psittacofulvins was unclear. The pre-existing understanding was limited to the knowledge that an enzyme known as PKS is responsible for the production of red aldehyde-based psittacofulvins. Now, however, recent studies reveal that an enzyme known as ALD3HA2 can control color in developing feathers by converting red pigments into shades of yellow through oxidation.

When accounting for other factors such as pigment ratios, the extent of enzyme activation (both PKS and ALD3HA2), melanin levels, and nanostructures (responsible for blue plumage), parrots can combine these elements to create vibrant and unique colours. Using chromatography, spectroscopy, and mass spectrometry, researchers at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis uncovered these insights. Consequently, scientists have finally solved the puzzle of how flamboyant colours develop in parrot plumage.

This research brings us closer to a clearer picture of the various genetic and chemical mechanisms influencing the many phenotypes (outwardly expressed characteristics) we observe at both a sub-species and an individual level. All of this helps us synthesize accurate and useful knowledge rooted in empirical evidence on the several systems in the real world that drive diversity across ecosystems.

Mathematical Insights Improve Neural Net Prediction Accuracy

Aryan Reddy Hande, 11: A novel approach to reservoir computing has been discovered by scientists at Tokyo University of Science. Published on December 28, 2024, this study enhances the accuracy and robustness of prediction with highly advanced mathematical concepts based on synchronization theory.

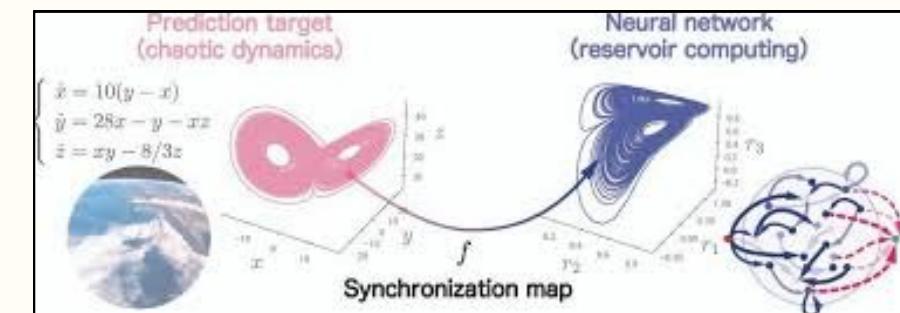
Reservoir computing is widely used for time-based data analysis in finance, robotics, speech recognition, and weather forecasting. Its efficiency makes it significantly different from traditional neural networks. Unlike conventional approaches that require training multiple layers of a network, Reservoir Computing relies on a fixed, randomly connected network called the "reservoir." Only the output layer undergoes training, typically through a straightforward linear regression. This design makes Reservoir Computing computationally efficient and particularly well-suited for tasks involving time-dependent data, such as forecasting complex systems.

Conventional Reservoir Computing methods face challenges in handling complex patterns within data. To overcome these limitations, Dr. Masanobu Inubushi and Ms. Akane Ohkubo from the Tokyo University of Science developed an innovative approach to enhance Reservoir Computing's performance. Their method introduces a generalized readout that utilizes a nonlinear combination of variables from the reservoir. This approach is rooted in generalized synchronization, a mathematical principle where the behaviour of one system can be fully described by the state of another.

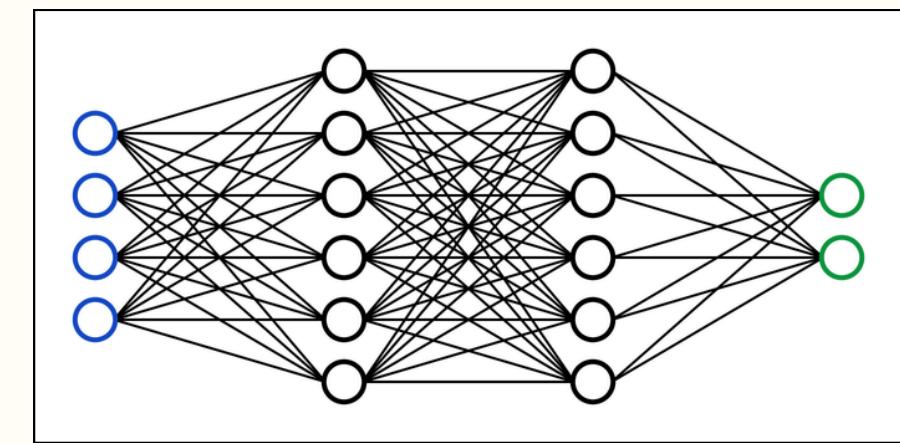
The new method uses a mathematical function called 'h', that links the state of the reservoir to the target value of a given task, such as predicting future states. By applying generalized synchronization, the researchers created a map that connects input data with the reservoir's state in a more complex and flexible way, uncovering deeper patterns. Despite the added complexity, this method still maintains the computational efficiency of traditional reservoir computing.

To test their approach, the researchers applied it to chaotic systems like the Lorenz and Rössler attractors, which model unpredictable atmospheric behaviour. The results showed significant improvements in both short—and long-term predictions, with higher accuracy and greater robustness compared to conventional RC.

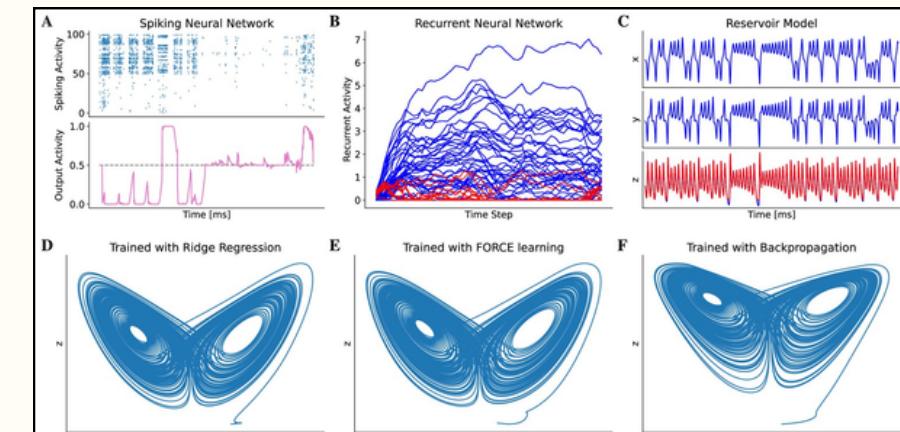
Dr. Inubushi explained that although this method was initially developed within the reservoir computing framework, the underlying principles of generalized synchronization and the new readout approach can be applied to other neural network architectures. While more research is needed to explore its full potential, this advancement marks a significant step in improving reservoir computing, with wide-reaching implications for various fields such as AI, finance, and beyond. Through this work, a clear demonstration of how mathematical theory can directly improve machine learning opens up new possibilities for more accurate and efficient predictive models.



Source: Tokyo University of Science



Source: ISML Numerical Libraries



Source: eLife Sciences

How the TikTok Ban Sparked US-China Cultural Exchange

Ruhi Beri, 11: On 17th January, the U.S. Supreme Court unanimously upheld the decision to ban TikTok on 19th January, a decision first signed into law in April 2024.

Although the TikTok ban did not last long—resuming its operations on 19th January itself due to President Donald Trump's intervention—the effects of the ban on society and culture were already becoming apparent, with many Americans scrambling to find and familiarise themselves with alternative social media platforms before the ban took effect.

One of these alternatives was the Chinese app Xiaohongshu, internationally known as RedNote. This social media app has content-sharing and e-commerce features alike, but importantly, a predominantly Chinese user base. An estimated 300 million Chinese citizens are on the platform.

This resulted in rare interactions between the native Chinese users and the new American ones, who often referred to themselves as "TikTok refugees." Unlike TikTok's fast-paced, entertainment-focused algorithm, RedNote encouraged more in-depth discussions, product recommendations, and personal experiences. As a result, some American users engaged with Chinese trends, products, and discussions in a way they never had before. On the other end, Chinese users observed an influx of Western content, shifting the dynamics of their digital space. Following the requirements of the Chinese Communist Party, RedNote enforces strict censorship surrounding political criticism and



Source: The Gaurdian

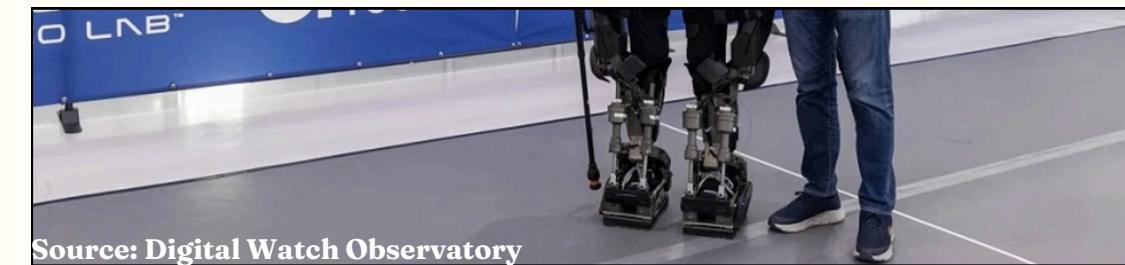
sexualised content. However, these restrictions were primarily applied to Chinese-language content, allowing English-language posts to bypass many of the usual moderation filters. As a result, Chinese users were exposed to discussions and perspectives that were otherwise uncommon on the platform, broadening their digital experience in unexpected ways.

The cultural exchange extended to language as well. Many American users began picking up common Chinese phrases used in posts and comments, while Chinese users encountered more English slang and internet expressions. Some posts even featured bilingual captions, reflecting an emerging blend of linguistic influences.

With TikTok's return to the U.S. and China's desire to rid American influence on their youth, it is unlikely that this rare cultural exchange will continue. Nevertheless, the phenomenon has highlighted the unexpected ways in which law and technology can influence culture, extending to digital behaviours, consumer trends, and global communication. Ultimately, the future of global interactions may not only lie in politics but also in the digital platforms that shape everyday life.

South Korean Team Develops Robot to Help Paraplegics Walk

Neil Daga, 11: A wheelchair is often seen as a tool of freedom, helping individuals regain independence and unlock their potential. However, it comes with its own set of challenges, especially when dealing with obstacles like stairs. For years, ramps have been the go-to solution, but they aren't without risks.



Source: Digital Watch Observatory

Steep ramps can lead to tipping backwards and require significant effort to climb.

So, what could be the ultimate solution—one that allows paraplegics to walk like anyone else, free from the fear of falling or relying on others?

South Korea has developed a groundbreaking solution that comes remarkably close to achieving this seemingly impossible goal.

The WalkOn Suit F1, developed by the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), is a revolutionary lightweight exoskeleton robot designed for individuals with paraplegia. It enables users to walk, climb stairs, and navigate their surroundings with ease. Inspired by the iconic character Iron Man, the suit represents a breakthrough in assistive technology. Park Jeong-su, a member of the KAIST team, envisioned creating a robot that could empower individuals

with disabilities and enhance their abilities. Lets dive deeper into the features of this suit. Made with lightweight material aluminium and titanium it weighs 50kg without compromising on its comfort or mobility and striking a perfect balance between strength and portability.



The exoskeleton operates through 12 electronic motors that mimic natural joint movements. This enables the user to walk at speeds of up to 2 mph, climb stairs and perform other complex movements.

The WalkOn Suit F1 is equipped with advanced features, including sensors for balance and motion, as well as environmental scanning with cameras. Its automatic user lock-on mechanism allows the suit to locate and attach itself to the user seamlessly.

Thanks to its intuitive design, users can control the suit effortlessly, making it highly practical for everyday use.

Kim Seung-hwan, a paraplegic researcher and team member, showcased the suit's capabilities by walking, climbing stairs, and even side-stepping onto a bench. His precise movements demonstrate the suit's transformative potential in redefining mobility for individuals with paraplegia.

AI Agents, AGI & Superintelligence: OpenAI's 2025 Roadmap How AI is Going to Revolutionize 2025

Riya Kaulwar, 10: OpenAI's roadmap for 2025 signals a massive shift in how we work, think, and interact with technology. The focus isn't just on making AI smarter; it is about making it more autonomous, integrated, and aligned with human goals. Three key developments stand out: AI agents, the path to AGI, and the long-term pursuit of superintelligence. What makes this especially exciting is how these advancements don't exist in isolation; they intertwine with other breakthroughs in robotics, biotechnology, and quantum computing, creating a future far more transformative than just better chatbots.

AI agents are set to move beyond mere assistants into fully independent problem-solvers. Imagine a world where these agents don't just answer emails but negotiate deals, draft reports with nuanced insights, or even run entire departments with minimal supervision. This fundamentally alters the way we work: shifting from task execution to strategic oversight. It's no longer just about automating repetitive jobs; it's about redefining what productivity means. In tandem, robotics is evolving to match AI's cognitive advancements, leading to physical machines that can not only process information but also act on it with precision. This fusion of AI and robotics could lead to factories with near-zero human intervention.

Artificial General Intelligence, promises machines that can think, reason, and learn across disciplines as well as (or even better than) humans. While this may sound distant, we're already seeing major growth in it. OpenAI's models are becoming better at abstract thinking, creative problem-solving, and self-improvement, mimicking the flexibility of human intelligence. The biggest impact here? The job market will shift from skill-based employment to one that prioritizes creativity, ethical judgment, and interdisciplinary thinking. AI won't just replace jobs, it will redefine them. When combined with quantum computing, the potential explodes: imagine AI models running complex climate simulations in minutes or



accelerating drug discovery by decades. The integration of these fields is what will make AGI truly powerful, pushing the boundaries of science and human capability.

Beyond AGI lies the pursuit of superintelligence, an entity surpassing human intelligence in every possible way. While this sparks both excitement and existential concerns, OpenAI is focusing on alignment, ensuring these models work towards human benefit rather than uncontrolled self-improvement. But here's where it gets interesting: superintelligence could unlock advancements in brain-computer interfaces, allowing humans to augment their cognition alongside AI. Instead of fearing getting "outdated" or "quickly replaced", we could be on the verge of a hybrid intelligence era, one where human creativity is amplified, not replaced.

What makes OpenAI's roadmap so significant is that it doesn't just predict the future; it shapes it. AI agents will redefine work, AGI will push human potential, and superintelligence could alter what it means to be human. The real insight lies in seeing AI not as an isolated technology but as the keystone holding together revolutions in multiple disciplines. The future won't belong to AI alone. It will belong to those who learn to work with it, shape it, and push its limits towards a world of unprecedented possibilities.



Economic impact of the Los Angeles wildfires

Suchita Agarwalla, 11: America suffered an unfortunate beginning to the new year, with a series of catastrophic wildfires engulfing Los Angeles on January 7th. According to the New York Times, the fire, which killed at least 29 people, injured many more and forced residents to abandon their homes with all of their belongings inside, will affect housing costs for years to come. The collapse of approximately 12,000 structures, including houses, companies, and key infrastructure, has displaced thousands and caused substantial financial hardship across numerous sectors, with economic losses ranging from \$50 billion to \$57 billion.

The impact on the housing market has especially been severe. Los Angeles was already facing a housing shortage, with 336,000 fewer homes than the demand. The destruction of thousands more has sent demand soaring higher, leading to a sharp increase in rental prices. The strain on insurance providers is expected to drive premiums even higher across California, again, exacerbating an already pressing affordability crisis. Home insurance rates in the state had surged by 43% between 2018 and 2023, and these fires will likely lead to further hikes.

Many residents are now struggling to find affordable temporary housing, and reports of price gouging have surfaced despite emergency rental caps. In some areas, rents have doubled within weeks of the fires, adding to the financial burden of displaced families.

The fires have also disrupted employment across multiple industries. Businesses that were destroyed or forced to shut



Source: Highlander

down have left thousands without jobs, particularly in sectors such as landscaping, education, and healthcare. Evacuations have resulted in a significant decline in workforce participation, and analysts estimate that 15,000 to 25,000 positions may be affected in the coming months.

This goes to prove that the long term economic impact of this disaster will not be minor. Rather, there will be a ripple effect across the local economy, as businesses will continue to struggle to recover from the financial shock.

India's Steel Ministry Seeks \$1.7B to Cut Emissions"

Avani Radheshyam, 11: India's steel ministry has requested ₹15,000 crore for 2025-26 to boost low-carbon steel production as part of the sector's broader decarbonization strategy to achieve Narendra Modi's 2070 net-zero target. If approved, the funds will provide financial incentives to steel mills and promote investment in cleaner technologies to reduce emissions.



Source: Economic Times

as green steel. The steel ministry's requested budget aims to promote greener production methods in mills by offering incentives to their owners.

Beyond the budget, the government has additional policy measures aimed at boosting green steel production. Some of these policy measures the government plans to take include:

- Encouraging banks to reduce interest rates on renewable energy loans, making sustainable energy sources more affordable for steelmakers
- Mandating the use of green steel in public infrastructure, increasing demand for environmentally friendly steel

If the budget request is approved, the steel ministry plans to draft a plan detailing the incentives that are expected to remain

India is the world's second-largest steel producer after China, and its steel industry is one of the biggest contributors to carbon emissions. Currently, India's carbon emissions from steel production are 38% higher than the global average, at 2.55 metric tons of carbon dioxide per ton of crude steel. Recently, the government classified steel produced with less than 2.2 metric tons of carbon dioxide per ton

until 2030, providing a clear timeline for the shift to green steel.

If it is done correctly, then this project has the capability of pushing India to be the leader in green steel production, which could make the Indian steel industry globally competitive while simultaneously sticking to its long-term climate goals.

The Resignation of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau: Implications for Canada

Sanvi Kurade, 10: The resignation of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has sparked widespread discussion about its implications for the nation's political future. Trudeau, who has led Canada since 2015, announced his decision to step down following a period of declining approval ratings, internal party struggles, and increasing challenges from the opposition. His departure signals a significant shift in Canadian politics, affecting both the Liberal Party and the broader political landscape.

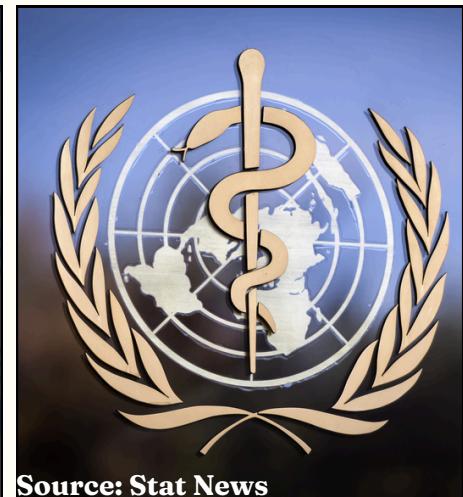
Trudeau's leadership, initially characterized by progressive policies and a strong international presence, became increasingly divisive in recent years. Economic concerns, including rising inflation and housing affordability issues, contributed to waning public support. Additionally, political controversies, such as the handling of the SNC-Lavalin affair and responses to Indigenous reconciliation, further strained his government's credibility. The resignation of key cabinet ministers in late 2024 exacerbated tensions within the Liberal Party, making leadership change seem inevitable.

The immediate political consequences of Trudeau's resignation are profound. The Liberal Party now faces the urgent task of selecting a new leader who can unify the party and reinvigorate voter confidence. With an upcoming federal election on the horizon, the party must address public discontent while countering the growing momentum of the Conservative opposition, led by Pierre Poilievre.



Beyond the Liberal Party, Trudeau's resignation alters the broader Canadian political climate. His departure creates an opportunity for opposition parties to capitalize on voter dissatisfaction and reshape the national conversation. The New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Bloc Québécois may seek to expand their influence, while the Conservatives are likely to strengthen their campaign by appealing to undecided voters who had previously supported Trudeau's Liberals.

Public reaction to Trudeau's resignation has been mixed. While some Canadians acknowledge his contributions to social policies, including carbon pricing and childcare initiatives, others view his departure as overdue, citing unmet promises and economic struggles. Whether the Liberal Party can successfully rebuild trust with voters will depend on the strength of its next leader and its ability to address key national concerns. The upcoming election will serve as a critical test of the party's resilience and adaptability in the face of political change.



Donald Trump Withdraws the U.S.A. from WHO

Syshasri Raghavan, 10: On January 20, 2025, President Donald Trump, on the first day of his second term, signed an executive order to withdraw the United States from the World Health Organization (WHO). A similar attempt was made during his first term in 2020 but was later reversed by former president Joe Biden.

In the executive order, President Trump criticized the WHO for its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and its alleged failure to enforce necessary regulations. He also raised concerns about political influence from member states within the organization. The withdrawal process requires a one-year notice, meaning the U.S. will officially leave the WHO in January 2026. In the meantime, the executive order has halted U.S. funding and support to the organization, a significant move given that the U.S. had been one of the largest financial contributors.

The international community has expressed concern over this decision, with mixed beliefs on what the future of WHO will be. The WHO issued a statement expressing regret over the United State's intent to withdraw, emphasizing the importance of global cooperation in addressing health challenges. Domestically, health experts and organizations have warned that this move could undermine global health initiatives and weaken the United State's influence in international health policy. Critics argue that disengaging from the WHO may hinder efforts to combat ongoing and future health crises.

As the U.S. withdrawal from the WHO progresses, its impact on global health governance and America's role in international health initiatives remains uncertain. This decision has sparked a wider debate about how to balance national interests with the necessity of global collaboration in addressing health crises.

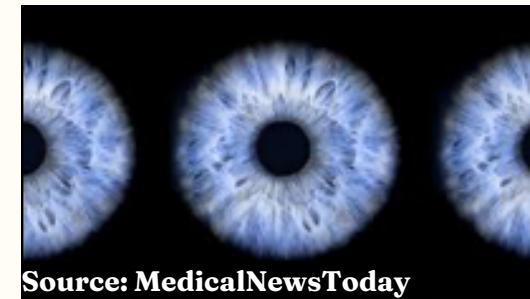
How Doctors May Be Able To Predict Your Stroke Risk Through Your Eye

Shresta Morisetty, 9: Some say that eyes are the window to your soul, but doctors have found that eyes offer a view into an individual's overall health. The retina is one of the few places in the body from which one can observe blood vessels non-invasively. According to an ophthalmology researcher, Mingguang He, MD, PhD, "Changes in the retinal blood vessels can indicate systemic vascular conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, and atherosclerosis."

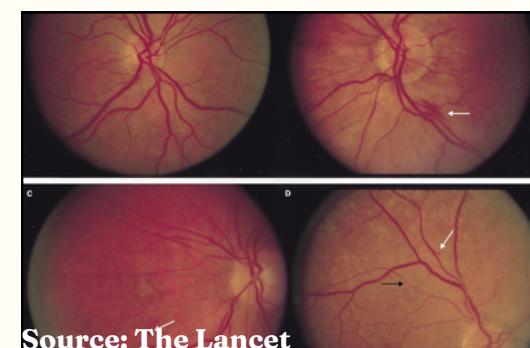
His recently published study uncovered the possibility of using a person's vascular 'fingerprint' to predict their stroke risk non-invasively. Vascular fingerprints are the unique retinal parameters or patterns in an individual's retina. Analyzing and studying this fingerprint can allow doctors to identify the risk factors and trends related to a stroke.

Researchers analyzed fundus images (retinal and blood vessel images) from over 45,000 participants to identify measurable biomarkers reflecting cellular activity. Their analysis revealed 118 retinal vascular indicators, 29 of which are strongly linked to first-time stroke risk. Notably, 17 of these 29 were density indicators, with each change associated with a 10-19% increase in stroke risk.

This technique is not only non-invasive but is also proven to be as effective as traditional techniques like blood draws, ultrasounds, CT scans, and MRIs which are invasive and more expensive. Predicting stroke risk through vascular fingerprint analysis is groundbreaking because of its potential to make stroke



Source: MedicalNewsToday



Source: The Lancet

risk screening more accessible and less resource-intensive, especially in underserved communities.



Breakthrough in Blood Test Predicting Heart Attacks

Avantika Singh, 9: Heart disease remains the leading cause of death worldwide, claiming over 18 million lives annually. Despite advancements in medical science, predicting heart attacks has largely depended on assessing lifestyle factors, cholesterol levels, and family history.

In a groundbreaking development that could transform the fight against heart disease, scientists have unveiled a revolutionary blood test capable of predicting the likelihood of a heart attack years before it strikes. This discovery is hailed as a "game-changer" by experts and promises to save millions of lives by enabling early intervention and personalized treatment plans.

The innovative blood test, developed by an international team of researchers, identifies specific biomarkers linked to arterial inflammation and plaque instability—two major culprits behind heart attacks. These biomarkers, previously difficult to detect, can now be measured with precision using advanced diagnostic tools.

The test requires just a small sample of blood, which is analyzed for a combination of proteins, enzymes, and other molecules that correlate with cardiovascular stress. Unlike traditional tests that focus on established heart disease, this new method zeroes in on potential future threats, offering a predictive window of up to five years. One of the standout features of this breakthrough is its accessibility. Researchers have ensured that the test is cost-effective and scalable, making it viable for widespread use in routine health check-ups.

While the blood test is a monumental step forward, researchers emphasize that it's not a standalone solution. It works best when combined with other preventive measures such as regular exercise, a balanced diet, and routine medical check-ups. Additionally, further studies are underway to refine the test and explore its potential applications for other cardiovascular conditions.

With its potential to prevent countless tragedies, and alleviate the global burden on healthcare systems, this innovation offers a glimmer of hope in the ongoing battle against heart disease.

Oscars 2025 Delayed Amid LA Wildfires

Venkat Raghav M., 11: The annual Academy Awards have been postponed and shifted to a virtual event, with one of its most cherished traditions—the nominees' luncheon—cancelled. This prestigious gathering of acclaimed directors, actors, and nominees, known for celebrating cinematic achievements, has been scrapped as Los Angeles battles catastrophic wildfires.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences said Monday that it will take its nomination announcement online as well, recognizing the bleak reality Hollywood faces. "We are all devastated by the impact of the fires and the profound losses experienced by so many in our community," said Academy CEO Bill Kramer and President Janet Yang.

The wildfires have thrown the film industry into chaos, stopping productions and sending stars like Anthony Hopkins, Mel Gibson, and Billy Crystal to join the ranks of those who have lost their homes. As the traditional award season is just beginning—a time typically marked by glamorous red carpets, premieres, and ceremonies—Hollywood now faces a difficult question: how to proceed without appearing insensitive to the ongoing crisis?

Some industry insiders are calling for major changes. Jean Smart, star of *Hacks*, has suggested cancelling the entire award season. "With ALL due respect, during Hollywood's season of celebration, I hope any networks televising the upcoming awards will seriously consider NOT airing them and instead donating the revenue to wildfire victims and firefighters,"

she wrote on Instagram. The future of Hollywood's biggest night—and the industry's approach to celebration in times of crisis—remains uncertain as Hollywood grapples with unprecedented challenges.



Source: Hindustan Times



Source: Sky News

Mahakumbh Mela: World's Biggest Religious Festival



Source: Tribune

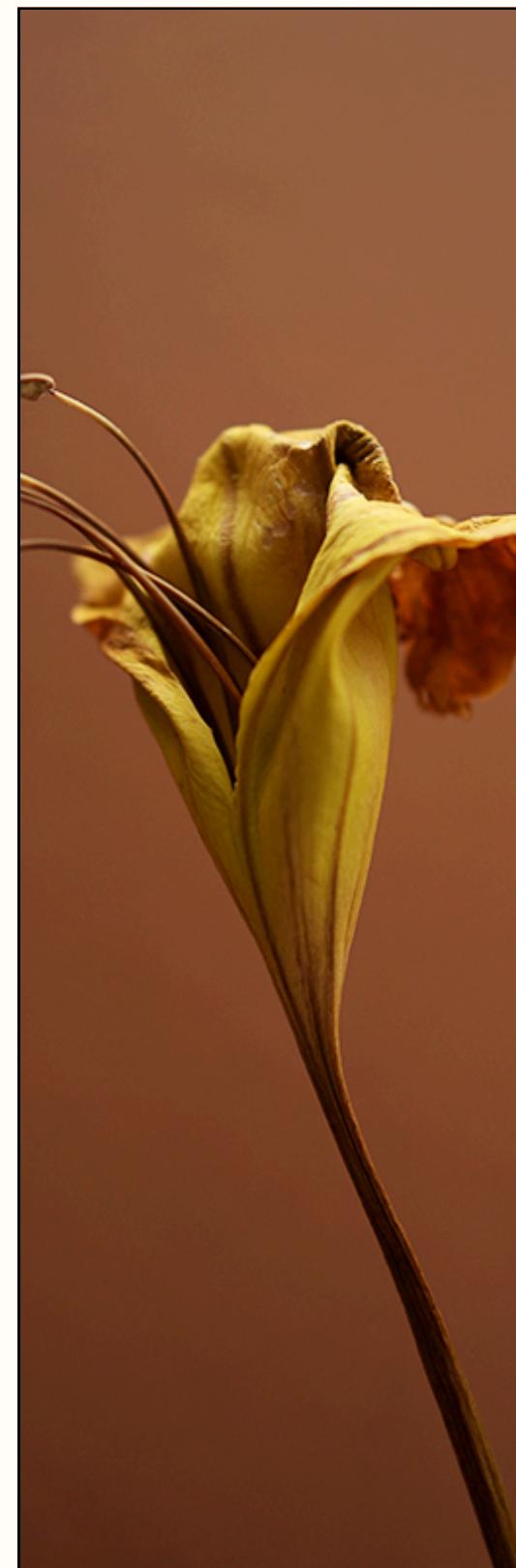
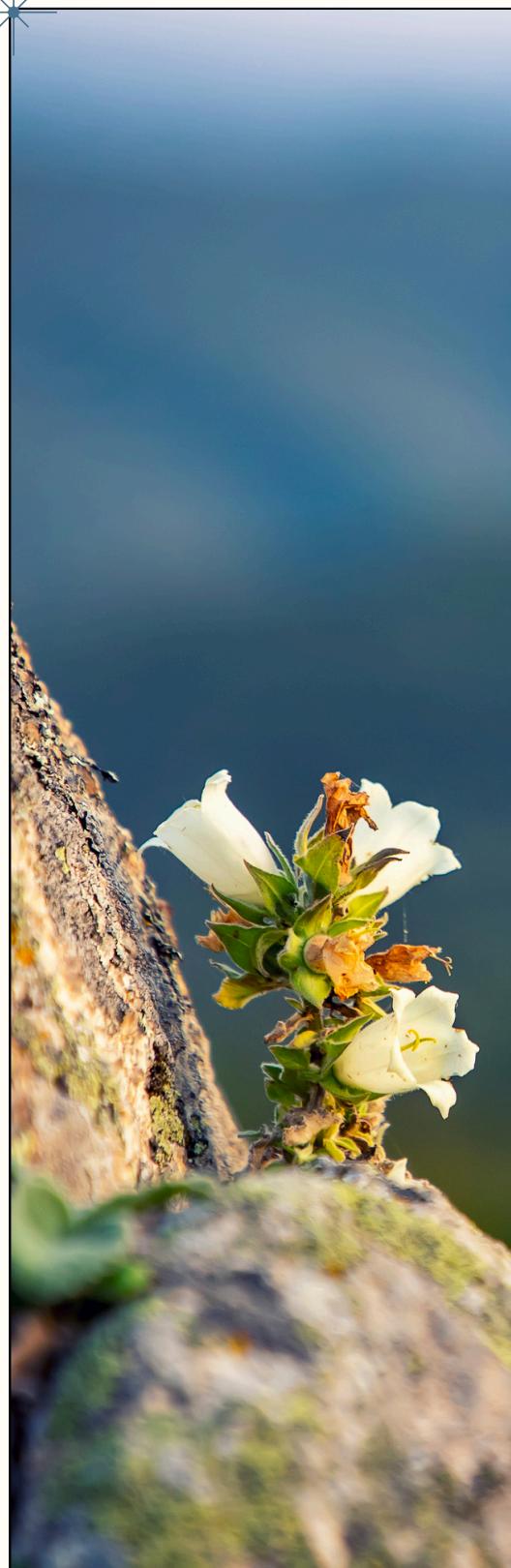
Tisha Sehrawat, 10: The much-awaited Mahakumbh Mela, the largest religious gathering in the world, is set to commence in India in 2025. This grand spectacle, which draws millions of devotees from across the globe, occurs once every 12 years, rotating between four sacred cities: Allahabad (Prayagraj), Haridwar, Nashik, and Ujjain. This year, the festival will be held in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, and it is expected to surpass all previous records in terms of participation.

The Mahakumbh Mela is a significant event in Hinduism, believed to be a time when the planets align, and the waters of the Ganges, Yamuna, and the mythical Sarasvati are considered most auspicious. Devotees believe that bathing in these holy rivers during the Mela will cleanse them of sins and grant them salvation. The festival spans several weeks, with the most auspicious bathing dates attracting millions of pilgrims to the banks of the rivers.

Beyond the religious significance, the Mahakumbh Mela is a vibrant cultural event. It features a dazzling array of religious rituals, processions, and cultural performances. This Mela has attracted not only Bollywood stars but also international figures, further amplifying its global significance. Philanthropist Laurene Powell Jobs participated in the Kalpvaks austerities at the Niranjani Akhara, immersing herself in India's spiritual heritage and highlighting the festival's universal appeal.

Meanwhile, singer Chris Martin and actress Dakota Johnson visited the Mela before heading to Delhi, adding global star power to the event. Their presence brought international media attention, attracting fans and followers worldwide and showcasing how the Mela transcends cultural and geographic boundaries. These celebrities' involvement emphasizes Mela's relevance in today's interconnected world and inspires countless individuals to engage with India's ancient spiritual traditions. As preparations unfold in Prayagraj, the government has been working on infrastructure improvements to accommodate the massive influx of visitors. Safety measures, sanitation, and traffic management will be key to ensuring the festival's success.

The Mahakumbh Mela 2025 promises to be a memorable and transformative experience, offering a blend of spirituality, culture, and unity on an unprecedented scale. It is a celebration of faith that continues to unite people from all walks of life, making it a significant event not just in India, but across the world.



How to Manage Stress Well

Dia Rautela, 9: Stress is a common part of our lives, especially as we juggle school, extracurriculars, and responsibilities. It drives us to complete our tasks and stay ahead - but too much of it can monopolize our health and mental well-being. To those who stress a lot, don't worry. Here are a few practical tips to incorporate into your life that will make it stress-free.

1. Organise

A cluttered schedule creates a cluttered mind. Use planners or apps to track assignments, deadlines, and tasks. Prioritize your work and break large tasks into smaller steps to make them feel more manageable.

2. Rest

Your brain needs downtime. Studying for hours without a break can make you less productive. Try the Pomodoro technique —study for 25 minutes, then take a 5-minute break. Also, ensure you get at least 7-9 hours of sleep each night.

3. Move

Exercise is a great way to release excess stress. A walk, stretching, or playing a sport can boost your mood and energy. This is because physical activity releases endorphins, which help reduce stress.

4. Breathe

When stress hits, take a moment to breathe deeply. Inhale for four seconds, hold for four and exhale for four. Meditation and mindfulness also help calm your mind and improve focus.

5. Talk

The easiest way to worsen your stress is bottling it up. Talk to a friend, teacher, or family member when things get a little too tough - sometimes, just sharing your feelings can lighten the load.

6. Productivity

Putting off tasks only increases stress. Set deadlines for yourself and stick to them. Start with the easiest task to build momentum, and make sure you make to-do lists and calenders to complete all your tasks well on time.

7. Fun

Reading, painting, listening to music, or spending time with family can help you relax. Taking time for hobbies can give you a mental break and refresh your mind.

8. Health

What you eat affects how you feel. Avoid too much caffeine or junk food, as they can increase anxiety. Drink enough water and eat a balanced diet for sustained energy.

9. Help

If stress becomes overwhelming, and affects your daily life, don't hesitate to seek support. Counselors, teachers, or mental health professionals can provide guidance. Although the conventions associated with therapy are negative, it is the perfect way to improve your mental health (and you can seek help no matter the issue).

Stress is inevitable, but managing it well can make a huge difference in your academic and personal life. By staying organized, taking care of your health, and finding time to relax, you can handle stress more effectively and perform your best.

F1 2025 Vs F1 2026

Krishiv Thummalapalli, 11: The world of F1 is constantly evolving, and in 2026, there will be huge changes in rules and cars. The 2026 season will bring a whole new set of rules and regulations, which has led some teams to admit they don't care about 2025 and will focus fully on 2026 changes. In the 2026 season, teams are assured to reveal new cutting-edge technologies that will bring the excitement to new heights. In the 2026 season, a strong focus has also been on being more eco-friendly and sustainable to reduce CO2 emissions.

Firstly, the size and weight have been reduced, making the cars lighter and smaller while making them more agile and aerodynamic. These changes have been done as a part of FIA's nimble car mission. Despite the car being lighter, there is increased protection around the front structure and doubled protection around the fuel cells with a roll hoop load increase from 16G to 20 G. They are also fitted with safety lights to show when ERS is activated to reduce accidents on the track. Along with, major aerodynamic changes to the F1 2026 season.

The most exciting change of all the new F1 2026 cars is that DRS will be replaced by movable front and rear wings, which will enable further drag reduction. The drivers will have 2 modes: X-mode and Z-mode. MOM (Manual Override Mode), a system similar to DRS, is being introduced and can be deployed when the car is below 1 second of the car in front.

The FIA also plans to use 100% sustainable fuel and decrease the fuel limit from 100 kg to 70 kg. The decrease in fuel limit is due to an increase in electrical power of almost 300%, making the cars need less fuel. However, this change also brings a challenge for the

driver. Turbo lag could return because the MGU-H has been removed, making the cars more difficult to control on corner exits. The 2026 cars are predicted through simulations to be 2 seconds faster in lap time.

In conclusion, the FIA aims to make the car faster aerodynamically and produce lower amounts of pollution, combining to create a set of rules and regulations that the FIA and teams hope will encourage innovation and sustainability, alongside tight racing.



Source: Sports Illustrated



Source: FIA, F1

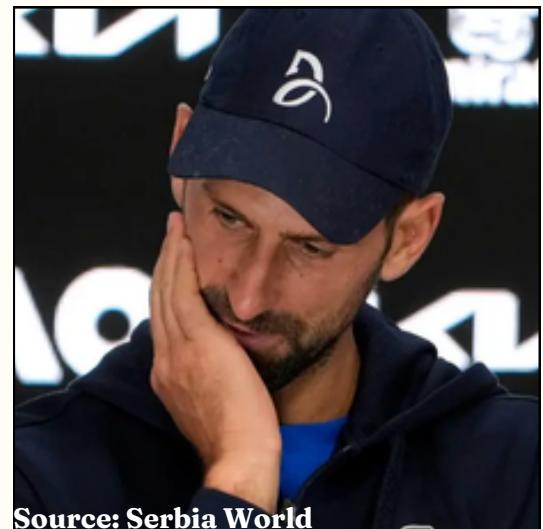
A triumph cut short by injury

Aarush Kommunuri, 11: It's the best match Novak Djokovic played during the 2025 Australian Open, and once again, his position among tennis's all-time greats will be further reconfirmed. As early as the first few rounds, it was Djokovic who exemplified hallmark precision, athleticism, and mental stamina, overpowering tough opponents with pinpoint shot placement and relentless baseline rallies. The one for him was also the game of the tournament: the in-game upset of Carlos Alcaraz in the quarterfinals was a scintillating, adrenalin-packed five-setter marked by brilliant strategic strokes. Of course, often he faced more agile and fresher opponents than himself, yet experience and versatility sufficed for Djokovic to go through the defining moments that turned him into an excellent contender here in Melbourne; something no athlete wins more frequently.

In his semifinal match against Alexander Zverev, Djokovic's campaign came to an abrupt end due to injury. After tearing a muscle in his left hamstring during the match with Alcaraz, he entered the semifinal visibly strapped and struggling with discomfort. Despite pushing the first set to a tiebreak, the pain became too much, and he was forced to withdraw. His departure was a blow to fans, as he had been a strong contender for another Australian Open title.

His injury was a stark reminder of the physical demands of top-level tennis, but his determination throughout the tournament further solidified his legacy. As he focuses on recovery, his performance in Melbourne will be remembered as another chapter in his career, highlighting both his skill and the realities of professional sports.

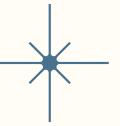
Despite the early end to his tournament, Djokovic's performance at the 2025 Australian Open showcased his enduring skill and resilience. At 37, he continued to challenge the limits of the sport, demonstrating that age is no obstacle when paired with talent, discipline, and determination. His physical strength, strategic precision, and ability to perform under pressure reinforced why he is a 24-time Grand Slam champion.



Source: Serbia World



Blue Beetle: Unmasking the Hero Within



Maanika S Gupta, 10: If you're in the mood for a superhero movie that feels different—one that's got heart, humour, and a family that steals the show—then *Blue Beetle* is the right choice. Directed by Ángel Manuel Soto, this DC entry takes a step away from the usual brooding capes and instead brings us Jaime Reyes, played brilliantly by Xolo Maridueña (yes, the same guy you've seen throwing kicks in *Cobra Kai*). This time, though, karate is set on a backburner as he wears an alien-tech suit that throws him head-on into being one full-on hero. Unlike all the other commonly lone-wolf heroes though, Jaime will not be venturing about to do so himself. His powerfully rambunctious, loud-loving family is lavished around him, situating *Blue Beetle* far removed from the usual fare of superheroes.

You are right smack in the middle of Jaime's world, which is full of real struggles and immigrant dreams from the very first scene, then tight-knit family bonds, and all when he is trying to figure out life as just a fresh graduate from college until a mysterious alien scarab fuses with him, transforming him into something he never asked to be. Incredible suit. Smooth, dynamic action—and CGI actually works. And the fight scenes? Cool and fun, plus full of not too much stress. But underlying all that hype, the heartbeat of this film is in their relationships—especially Jaime with the family.

Speaking of family, let's talk about Nana. Adriana Barraza's character goes from sweet, loving Abuela to total badass in a way that has you both laughing and cheering. And George Lopez as Uncle Rudy? Absolute comedic gold. The

humour is natural, never forced, and the emotional beats hit just as hard as the action sequences.

Every hero needs his villain, and here *Blue Beetle* stumbles. Susan Sarandon's Victoria Kord is just the corporate standard—power-mad, uncaring, a little too cookie-cutter, and hardly all that memorable aside from the rest of the cast. The true evil in the world is Carapax, however; it begins its movie behaving just like one heck of a clichéd sidekick but winds it up with the nearly startling odyssey through his emotions at the film's end.

The cultural authenticity of every frame is something that makes this movie shine. It's not exploiting Jaime's Mexican-American heritage and draping that over a plot; it comes through in how his family talks to one another, the sounds, the speech, and traditions. That is what gives *Blue Beetle* that personal feel that a lot of other superhero movies just miss.

In the end, *Blue Beetle* is a new, exciting twist on the superhero genre. It has action, comedy, and just the right amount of heartfelt moments, all wrapped up in a story that feels real. Whether you're here for the sci-fi, the family dynamic, or just to see Xolo Maridueña step up from the dojo to superhero status, this one is worth the watch. Trust me, you won't regret it.



Source: BBC

Indus School of Leadership & Sports Day

Advaith Datta Reddy Palam, 10: The Indus School of Leadership was quite an adventure this time around, as long as that adventure included either climbing rock walls or scurrying down some narrow pathway on the treasure hunt. And we could be in some multi-kilometre-wide treasure hunt that only requires brains, teamwork, and cryptic clues to follow. On the way, we learned that without effective communication, a misinterpreted clue might lead us far away from the path. Luckily, we stuck together, encouraged each other, and celebrated every success.

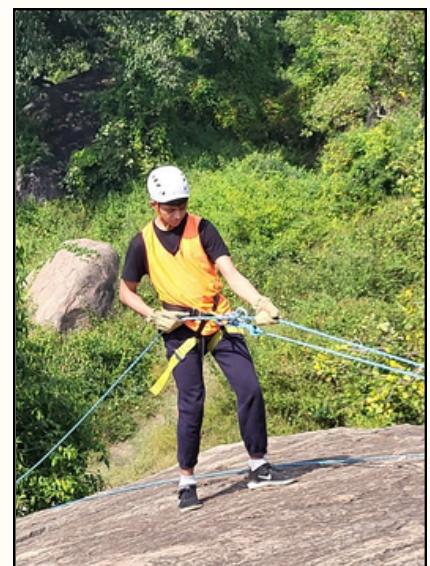
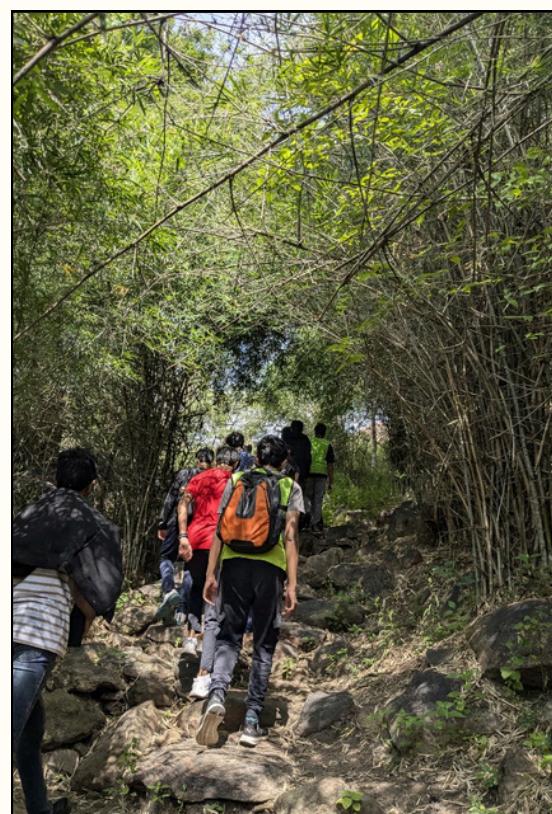
And it was more than just obstacles and treasure hunts. We even had the chance to cook our meals after that long hike. We tasted independence and the worth of delegation of tasks from that experience. Obstacle courses and rock climbing required tenacity and quick problem-solving. It was a test of our strength when we slipped on a rope bridge or lost our grip on a climb, reminding us that even the most difficult challenges can be conquered with perseverance and mutual faith.

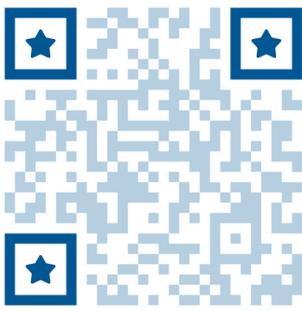
Fast-forward last week to coming back to school after the holidays when we kicked off the much-anticipated Sports Day. As obvious, the six exciting events managed to give a very active hue to campus amidst healthy rivalry-cum-good friendship between comrades: badminton, basketball, track relay, football, fierce tug-of-war, and just for show, team badminton events. No event missed infectious fervour. Of course, sitting on the sidelines was part of a team where everyone came out to cheer for teammates.

We saw frantic rallies and spectacular saves in badminton; it unearthed all the concealed talents among our fellow colleagues. A session of mere pure hard work, not giving up at tug-of-war's station where cunning brilliance was merely useless. Going home with many new things for everyone: working as a team, how one can have loads of fun trying to compete at the same time, and the sensation of pushing myself whatever ensued.

Our Sports Day and the Indus School of Leadership expedition both demonstrated the results of stepping outside of our comfort zones. We came to understand the value of coordination, communication, trust, and sharing in one other's successes, no matter how minor. These encounters served as a reminder that school is a place where we develop our character, push boundaries, and embrace personal development in addition to classes and homework.

It's easy to say that every one of us came away from these experiences with closer ties, new perspectives, and a greater understanding of what real cooperation can do as we close up another chapter of our school's highlights. I hope the future holds many more unforgettable experiences.





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