THE HINDU
# Young world

₹ 10.00
VOL.11 • NO.1

TREASURE IN YOUR HANDS

FRIDAY, JANUARY 5, 2024

Pg 03

## Feel the Dots

Why is World Braille Day important? Read on ...

Pg 6, 7

## High Flyers

Rama and Bharata enter the game

# FROZEN FANTASIES

**Have you heard of the Harbin Ice and Snow Festival? This annual event held in Harbin, China, is a winter wonderland. Turn to Page 14-15 to see some marvellous structures built from ice.**

# A hidden world

**Taran and family visit Kotumsar Caves to see fish that have not been exposed to light for millions of years.**

Illustration: Sonal Goyal

Vidya Nesarikar

"Blind fish? For real? It sounds very strange, Appa," said Taran. They were navigating the narrow muddy gravel roads of Kanger Valley National Park, Chhattisgarh, heading for the Kotumsar Limestone Caves.

"The *Indoreonectes evezardi* have lived in these underground caves for millions of years. Never having been exposed to sunlight, they evolved to lose their sight. They navigate by sound waves that bounce off objects," said Appa, as the driver parked the jeep.

They joined the guide who asked them to stay silent and follow the rules at all times. "We are in the premises of animals. Let's respect the surroundings," he greeted them with a *namaste*.

Taran nodded. He was excited

**Time Travel**

now. Everything was quiet and green and there was a cool breeze and it was slightly moist. "A proper jungle! This feels like an adventure."

Steps led them down to the mouth of the cave and they saw a small board 'Kotumsar Gufa', an iron shutter and a guard. They started their descent. "Ugh, it's narrow and hardly any light. Thankfully, there are steps," said Taran, suddenly unsure about it.

"It's not for long," assured the guide, leading the way with a torch. Some people behind them were complaining of claustrophobia. They trudged on and, finally, landed on flat ground. It was dark; the only light was the guide's torch. All around were formations of stalagmites and stalactites.

"Stalactites grow down from the ceiling, while stalagmites grow up from the floor," the guide explained.

"They look like dinosaur teeth," said Taran.

Soon they were led to a small pool of water and the guide pointed to some little fish swimming around: pale, colourless and about 4 cm long.

"They look a bit plain," observed Taran. Amma whispered back, "They're albinos and have not been exposed to light." They watched the fish and tried to get some photos before heading back to the surface.

Back in the fresh air, they waited for their jeep to arrive and take them to the nearest town, Jagdalpur. Taran sat on a tree trunk. "It felt like *A Journey to The Centre of the Earth*. So different from anything I have seen," he said. "Do you think there are other life forms that we know nothing about like the little fish? Maybe even some big creatures?"

"There is a huge biodiversity in such caves, especially microorganisms. I doubt there are dinosaurs though," smiled Appa.

"Should we even be here, disturbing them with our torchlights and noise?" wondered Taran.

"Good question," said Amma. "Like any eco-tourism initiative, it is all about balance and not spoiling the habitat. They take only a limited number of people to visit these caves a day."

Taran nodded, as he watched the jeep approach. "So long, fish. Stay safe," he waved, suddenly feeling protective about the little blind fish, as he looked back towards Kotumsar Caves one last time.

Take ten

# AN IN'SIGHT'FUL INVENTION

**With the invention of the Braille system, Louis Braille revolutionised communication for the visually-impaired, and how!**

Nimi Kurian

**1** World Braille Day is celebrated on January 4, the birthday of **Louis Braille**, French educator and inventor.

**2** Born in 1809, in France, Braille lost his eyesight in an accident. At the age of 15, he created a reading-and-writing system based on Charles Barbier's night-writing system.

**3** World Braille Day was first celebrated in 2019 to raise awareness of Braille as a means of communication while fully realising the human rights of the visually challenged.

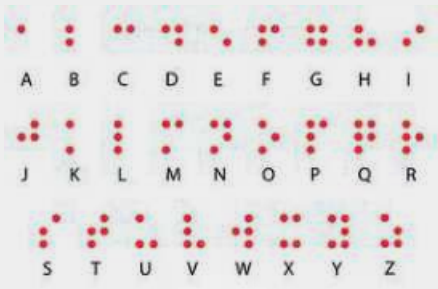
**4** January 4 also marks the beginning of Braille Literacy Month to raise awareness of the importance of Braille.

**5** Braille uses alphabetical and numeral symbols in a manner that can be read by passing one's fingers over them. Every letter and number, as well as musical, mathematical and scientific symbols, are represented by dots ranging from one to six.

**6** In Article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Braille is essential in the context of education, freedom of expression and opinion, as well as social inclusion.

**7** This day is a reminder of the importance of accessibility and independence for visually challenged people.

**8** Today, many establishments — banks, restaurants, hospitals — do not offer a Braille version of their printed material. Hence, visually-impaired people cannot read and make choices.




**9** Castle Sant'Elmo, a popular Italian fortress in Napoli and a tourist attraction, has a hand rail which is actually an art installation by Paolo Puddu. Titled *Follow the Shape*, it offers a poetic description of the view in Braille.

**10** The Braille typewriter differs from regular ones. It has six keys correlating to the six dots in the Braille cell, and an enter button, a backspace, and a space key.

# The scooter superboy

**With a tottering two-wheeler and a boring tiffin, Samay couldn't be more embarrassed at school.**

Illustration: Satheesh Vellinezhi

LESLEY BISWAS

With every kick his father gave that failed to start his old scooter, Samay's grin grew wider. But he was careful not to let Papa notice. Inside his chest, Samay's heart danced. Finally, when Papa gave up and handed him a five rupee coin to take a rickshaw to school, Samay broke out into a happy dance in his head.

He would be saved the embarrassment of arriving at school on a ramshackle scooter while most of his classmates came in their fancy cars, or by AC school bus. He could also buy himself a small treat to perk up the unappealing *roti* and *sabzi* his mother packed for *tiffin* daily, another embarrassment according to him.

**Talespin**

But, in order to get the treat, Samay had to dash down the street, urging his aching legs to cooperate a little, lest he be late for school. The last thing he wanted was his class teacher's complaint in his diary or a call to his parents.

As days went by, the old scooter grew older and it gave more trouble. Samay, on the other hand, grew quicker and his legs no longer ached when he sprinted off to school. And, when Papa sought the opinion of family members on whether he should sell the old vehicle, Samay was the first to nod 'yes'.

**To get the treat, Samay had to dash down the street, urging his legs to cooperate.**

**A shock for Samay**

Things appeared to be in total control until one evening Papa returned home and called out from the gate, "Samay, I have a surprise. Hurry up and look out of the window."

To Samay's horror, he saw Papa perched proudly on a new, bright yellow scooter, waving at him. Tears filled Samay's eyes. Now there was no escaping the jeers and hoots of his classmates.

The next morning, Samay woke up and complained of stomach ache to escape going to school. But the following day was sports selection. He had been hoping to make it to the athletics team to represent his school in the upcoming inter-school sports tournament. That was the only way he could make his presence felt amongst a bunch of rich kids who ignored him.

The following morning, Samay's chest felt as if it would explode as Papa braked his new scooter right in front of the school gate. Samay glanced around furtively but, despite all efforts to cover his face with his school bag, a few classmates spotted him and chuckled. Samay's ears grew hot and red. He ran to his seat at the last bench and sat down, and tried hard to calm his heartbeat. He was relieved that sports selection was scheduled in the very first period. Little did Samay know that his life was going to change forever.

**Star performer**

In every track and field event, Samay came first, much to all his classmates' dismay and his own disbelief. But when the physical instructor lauded his fitness and stamina and asked about his exercise regime and diet, the reason for his success became evident. His daily sprint to school and his nutritious home-cooked *tiffin* had made him the best athlete in school.

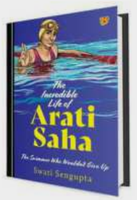
Samay went on to win every event in the tournament and got the best athlete award. From then on, he was nicknamed 'The Scooter Superboy'. He no longer felt ashamed of arriving by scooter.

He also made sure that he ran round the school playground regularly. To his great pleasure and pride, he found many of his classmates following his example.

## Bookworm

**Title:** Mahi: The Elephant Who Flew Over the Blue Mountains
**Author:** Anand Neelakantan
**Publisher:** Harper Collins
**Price:** ₹399

When Mahi, a young elephant, decides to fulfil his dream of flying over the blue mountains, little does he know that he's setting in motion a chain of events that will endanger him, his mother and the whole of Anastan. He has only one goal: to find and rescue Varana, his father, former chief of the herd, who has disappeared under mysterious circumstances. Trumpo, their vice president, is convinced that the wicked tigers of Pulistan have killed Varana. But can Mahi trust Trumpo? Who is his friend, and who is his foe? BJoin Mahi on his exciting journey and discover whether he does, one day, really soar over the blue mountains.




**Title:** The Incredible Life of Arati Saha: The Swimmer Who Wouldn't Give Up
**Author:** Swati Sengupta
**Publisher:** Talking Cub
**Price:** ₹250

From the moment she learnt to swim, Arati set her eyes on difficult challenges. Then she decided to do what no Asian woman had done before: swim the English Channel. She trained in the lakes and pools of Kolkata, once swimming for 16 hours at a stretch. Overcoming many odds, she went to England where, undaunted by one failed attempt, she tried again and again, till she was successful. This is the inspiring story of how a seemingly ordinary girl set her eyes on impossible dreams and swam her way into history.

**Title:** Animals in the House
**Author:** Ruskin Bond
**Publisher:** Puffin
**Price:** ₹199

Instead of having brothers and sisters to grow up with in India, young Ruskin had several odd companions, including a monkey, a tortoise, a python and a Great Indian Hornbill. His grandfather was responsible for all this wildlife, and their home in Dehra became a centre of action and laughter as a variety of creatures were brought home — the furry, feathered, fierce and friendly — all under one roof. Bursting with illustrations, this chapter book is a perfect introduction to the world of Ruskin Bond.

Illustration: Sahil Apalekar

# The Prince of Ayodhya

**Rama explains thrust vectoring and guided missile technology to Kaikeyi but also makes an enemy of Manthara.**

Jagadeesh Kanna

**Story so far:** As Manthara and Kaikeyi listen to Lakshmana and Shatrugna, arrows fly in and scratch Manthara's back. Kaikeyi and Manthara look towards that side in anger.

As they turn to see who shot the arrows, one arrow flies in a strange way, changing direction from left to right, right to left, top to bottom and then suddenly straightens itself.

**Manthara (astonished):** What is this weird arrow travelling in different directions like a bird?

Kaikeyi picks up the arrow to examine it and sees a hollow bamboo filled with a white powder.

**Kaikeyi:** Very few archers are capable of this kind of arrow control.

Suddenly from inside the arrow, they hear the noise of a pigeon. When Kaikeyi throws it down, the pigeon flies away.

**Kaikeyi (confused):** It is not very professional but is not an easy technique to practise.

## Sky High

**Manthara:** Enough, Kaikeyi. Attacking an old woman like me is not a good thing. Whoever did this must be punished...

A young boy comes running in, his head gear glowing in the sunlight. Manthara realises it is Kaikeyi's son Bharata and stops short.

**Manthara:** ... Unless it was done in love.

Kaikeyi understands that Manthara added the rider because it was Bharata.

**Kaikeyi:** A mistake is a mistake, whether made out of love or not.

Bharata races in and stops in front of Kaikeyi and waves his hands to stop her from talking.

**Bharata:** Did you notice? I did it?

**Kaikeyi (harshly):** Yes, I noticed but did your guru teach you to attack innocent people?

Bharata's face crumples and he begins to cry.

**Manthara (hugs Bharata):** It's okay if he hurt me. He is our little boy. It may have been a mistake.

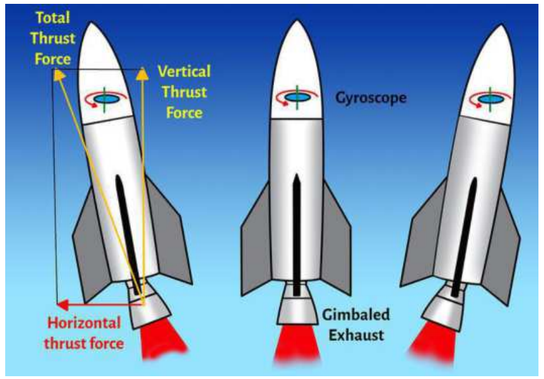
**Kaikeyi:** Don't be biased. A mistake is a mistake whether it is my son or not. As a prince, he cannot hurt innocents even by mistake.

As Bharata falls to his knees crying, Kaikeyi lifts the arrow as if about to hit him. Suddenly 16 more direction-controlled arrows emitting smoke fall around Bharata protecting him. Both Kaikeyi and Manthara are shocked. From the smoke emerges a long arm holding a beautiful bow. Rama, the prince of Ayodhya and son of Kausalya, steps out.

**Rama:** Stop, mother. It's not his mistake. It's mine. I asked him to hit a specific target.

**Kaikeyi (angrily):** You are not behaving like a prince, Rama.






Illustrations: Satheesh Vellinezhi

**Rama:** Mother, isn't there a saying, "To discern the truth in everything, by whomsoever spoken, is wisdom."

**Manthara:** He is very conceited; thinks whatever he does is right.

**Ram (to Kaikeyi):** Mother, you are angry now. Please calm down because "truth can't be seen in a state of anger."

**Manthara:** You are so young and you think you can advise the queen?

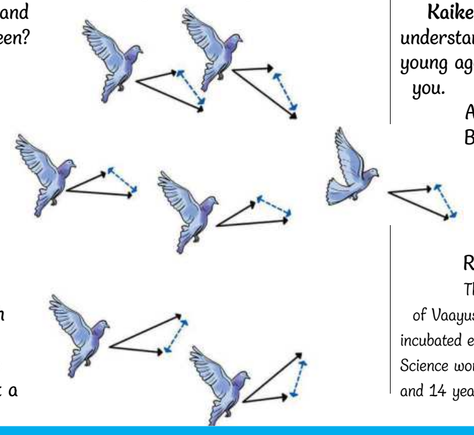
**Kaikeyi:** Wait, Manthara. He has a point. Rama, tell me what happened.

**Rama (to Manthara):** Please stand in the position you were in earlier.

**(To Kaikeyi):** Mother, please come with me. You too, Bharata, Lakshmana and Shatrugna.

Manthara stands in the practising arena at a point which is higher than other places. The others go to the place where the boys were practising, which is at a lower level. Many round stones are lying around here. Kaikeyi turns to look at where Manthara is standing and her eyes widen. She realises what happened: the boys were unable to see Manthara except for her hunchback, which resembles the round stones. Kaikeyi hugs Rama.

**Kaikeyi:** I am sorry, Rama. And apologies to all of you boys too.



**Rama:** Sorry is a big word, mother. It was a misjudgment. As the prince, it was my duty to make you understand. Not only are you a queen but you are also the king's charioteer in war.

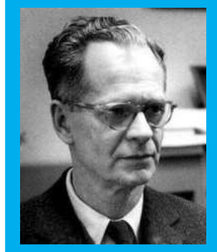
**Kaikeyi:** I am proud of you, Rama. Now tell me why are there pigeons in your arrows?

**Rama:** Guru Vasishta taught me that it is called thrust vectoring and guided missile technology. A direction-control mechanism for arrows, rockets and missiles. Since it has to be done manually, I used pigeons, which I trained to focus on a target. Even when the image is moved, they turn their heads to keep looking at the target. I tied a bunch of strings to their necks and connected those to the fins and nozzles. The white smoke is the propellant — a combination of sugar and potassium nitrate, which father taught me. (Ref: Episode 48.)

**Kaikeyi:** You have a great understanding of technology at such a young age, Rama. I am so proud of you.

All the brothers are happy. But all of them, including Kaikeyi, have forgotten Manthara. Standing in the sun in the practising arena and fuming, in her mind, Rama is to blame for it all.

*The author is the founder and CEO of Vaayusastra Aerospace, an IIT-Madras incubated ed-tech startup that offers Air Science workshops for children between five and 14 years.*



## Project Pigeon

**An attempt by American behaviourist B.F. Skinner to use pigeons to control and guide bombs, the experiment was made during World War II. Skinner felt that pigeons could be trained to recognise targets and guide the missile. Even though the National Defense Research Committee did not think much of the idea, it gave Skinner $25,000 for research. Skinner did have some success with training pigeons but "our problem was no one would take us seriously". The project was cancelled in 1944 because the authorities wanted to focus on other projects that could be applied immediately. In 1948, the U.S. Navy revived the project as Project Orcon but cancelled it in 1953 when electronic guidance systems proved to be reliable.**

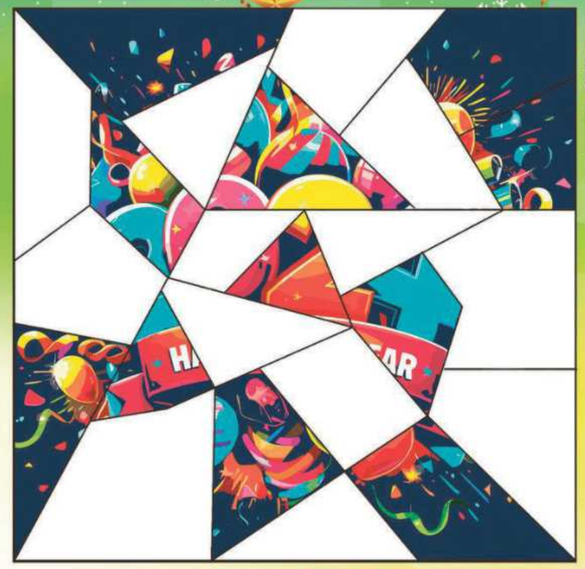
# DOTS & DASHES

K.C. Rangarajan

## Happy New Year

## Puzzle Party

Put the jigsaw together and find the story each piece tells.

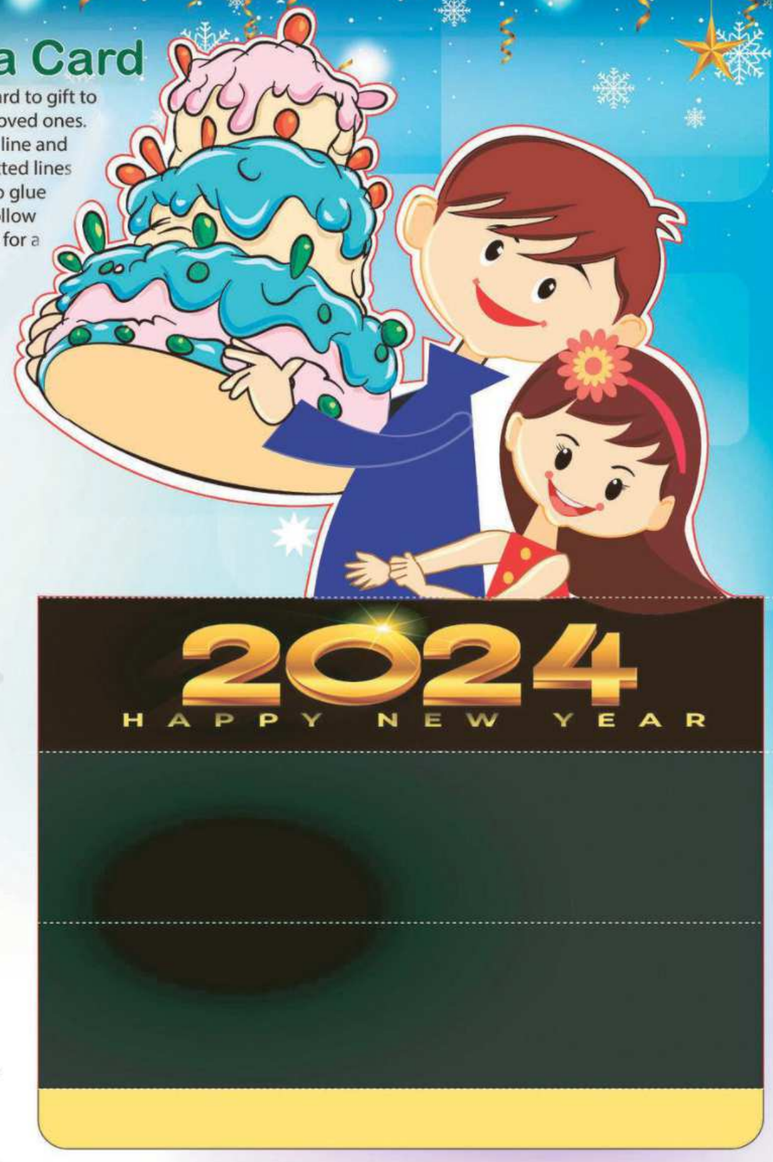


## Eagle-Eyed Adventure

Discover the 10 items that make the two images different

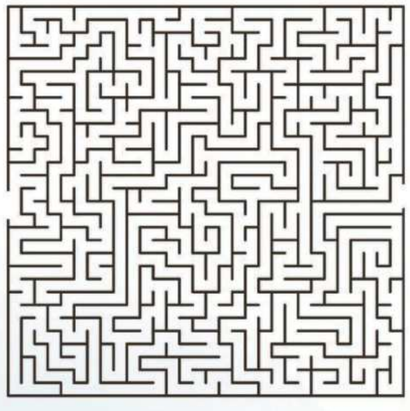
## Create a Card

Make your own card to gift to your friends and loved ones. Cut along the red line and fold along the dotted lines Also, remember to glue the yellow bits. Follow the pictorial clues for a super-special handmade gift.




## Maze Master

Chart a course to help the kids find their way to an exciting surprise



# quiz Whizz

GINA NEUTRON

1 Only two planets in the solar system don't have any moons. Name them.

2 Which place accounts for around 85% of India's strawberry production?

3 Which mythical creature appears on the national flags of Bhutan, Wales and Malta?

4 Larisa Latynina is the most successful female Olympian in history. Which discipline?

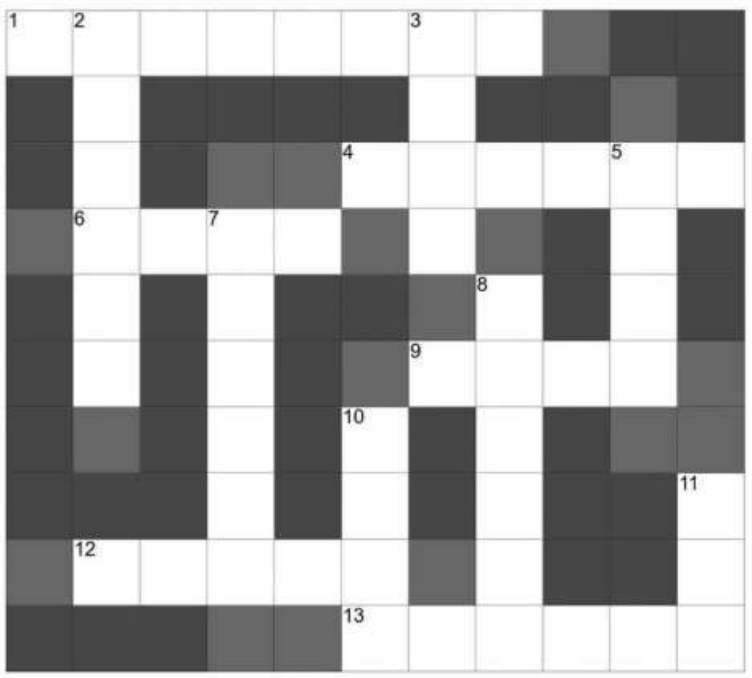
5 Bats are capable of something that no other mammal in the world can do. What?

6 Mauna Loa is the world's largest active volcano. Where is it located?

## CROSSWORD FOR YOU

Bhavya Venkatesh

### Element enigma



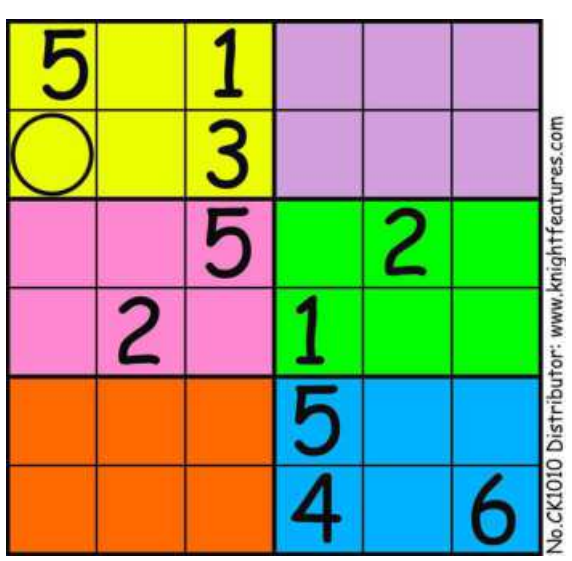
**ACROSS**

**1** Chemical used to disinfect swimming pools and drinking water (8)
**4** This element gives its name to a shade of blue (6)
**6** An important component of haemoglobin in blood (4)
**9** A precious metal; the only one that's naturally yellow (4)
**12** The only element that starts with X (5)
**13** Diamonds are made of _____ (6)

**DOWN**

**2** Gas that is filled into balloons to make them float and rise (6)
**3** Noble gas used in electric signs and fluorescent lamps (4)
**5** A heavy metal that is known to be damaging to the nervous system (4)
**7** Earth's most abundant element; we need it to breathe (6)
**8** The Statue of Liberty is made up of 300 sheets of this metal (6)
**10** Only two elements begin with Z — one is Zirconium, the other is ____ (4)
**11** Soft metal used in the production of cans (3)

## SUDOKU

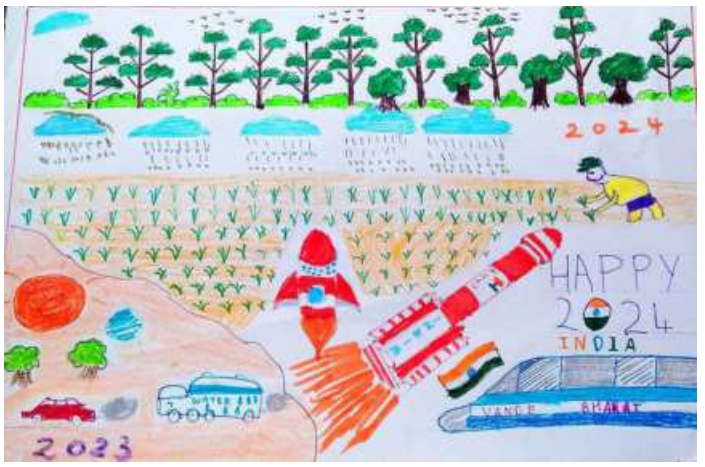



Solutions on Page 16

# Scrapbook

**Nihira Rao**, V, Sherwood High School, Bengaluru, Karnataka

**Ruthveeka Barua**, I, Shanti Asiatic School, Ahmedabad, Gujarat



**M.Kumarappan**, III, Narayana e-Techno School Medavakkam, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

**Parthiv P.**, VII, PM Shri Kendriya Vidyalaya 1, Palakkad, Kerala

**S. Farasha Maheen**, VI, KVR (EM) High School, Kurnool Andhra Pradesh

**Vollu Naveenaabhiram**, VI, Visakha Valley School, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

## Arihant's adventure

In the city of Patna, lived a young adventurer named Arihant, who was known for his curiosity and love for exploring the city.

One New Year's eve approached, he decided to take his friends on a night of adventure that would take them to the heart of Patna's mysteries.

At midnight, Arihant, Shaswat, Aanya, Aakanksha and Harshit, navigated the city's narrow lanes. Arihant led them to an ancient temple rumoured to hold a secret chamber filled with ancient artefacts. They stepped into the courtyard and Arihant guided them through the temple's hidden passages.

Deep within, they stumbled upon a forgotten chamber; its walls adorned with murals told tales of kings and warriors and of the city's past.

As the first light of the New Year emerged, they emerged from the temple, with a newfound appreciation for Patna's history. In the following days, they became storytellers, sharing the ancient tales of Patna with their schoolmates and families.

**Arihant Mayur**, VI A, St. Michael's High School, Patna, Bihar

# Scrapbook

**N. PragathiLakshmi,** V D, Sunshine SSM Sr. Sec.School, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

**P. Komala Krishna Sri,** VI, Sasi Educational Institutions, West Godavari, Andhra Pradesh

## The day of light

On New Year eve's,
There's a blaze of light.
Boom, bang, pop!
Firecrackers burst from
the rooftop.
We celebrate with parties,
And lots of festivities.
We make resolutions,
And follow our traditions.
Some sing a song,
And stay outside for long.
It's New Year, Let's celebrate.
This year, Our happiness, may we elevate.

**Adhrit V. Balasubramanian,** IV, The Green Acres Academy, Mumbai, Maharashtra

**V. Srivatsa Sravani,** VII, Sri Sathya Sai Gurukulam E.M. School, Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh

**Lakshmi Saahithi Dronamraju,** VI, Meridian School, Hyderabad, Telangana

**S. Anumithra,** III, Srivi Lions International School, Srivilliputtur, Tamil Nadu

**Mahie Dadheech,** V D, Lourdes Central School, Mangaluru, Karnataka

**Aadhya Anniesh,** II, St. Kanakadasa Sr. Sec. School, Bargur, Tamil Nadu

**Pugazh Aadhira,** IV, Vels Global School, Chennai, Tamil Nadu

# Scrapbook

**A. Dikshitha Valli,** VII, Sri Sathya SAi Gurukulam E.M. School Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh

**Arjun Venkatasubramanian,** II, Vydehi School of Excellence, Bengaluru, Karnataka

**Mihika Baxi,** III, The Bishops Co-Ed School, Pune, Maharashtra

**Sreehari A.,** III, St. Paul's English Medium School, Pattambi, Kerala

**P. Arulini,** IV, Maharishi Vidhya Mandir, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

**Misha Fathima,** V, NITK English Medium School, Mangaluru, Karnataka

## Welcome 2024

Ring in 2024, ring out 2023
Ring in joy, ring out sadness
Ring in good health, ring out diseases
Ring in peace, Ring out war
Ring in friendship, ring out enemies
Ring in light, ring out darkness
2023 is going, let it go.

**Archisha Baidya,** I, Delhi Public School, Kolkata, West Bengal

## Dear Year

The year is born
A bonny baby in the cold of January
It begins to crawl in February
Toddles along March
And starts to run in April
Begins kindergarten in May
Passes school in June
Goes to college in July
Gets a job in August
Marries in September
Does great deeds in October
Retires in November
And vanishes in December

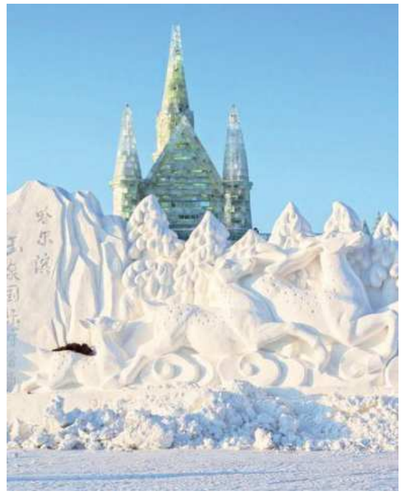
**Aarti Anbalagan,** III, Kendriya Vidyalaya-NAL Campus, Bengaluru, Karnataka

# Icy wonders

**Revel in the splendour of fantastic sculptures made of ice and snow.**

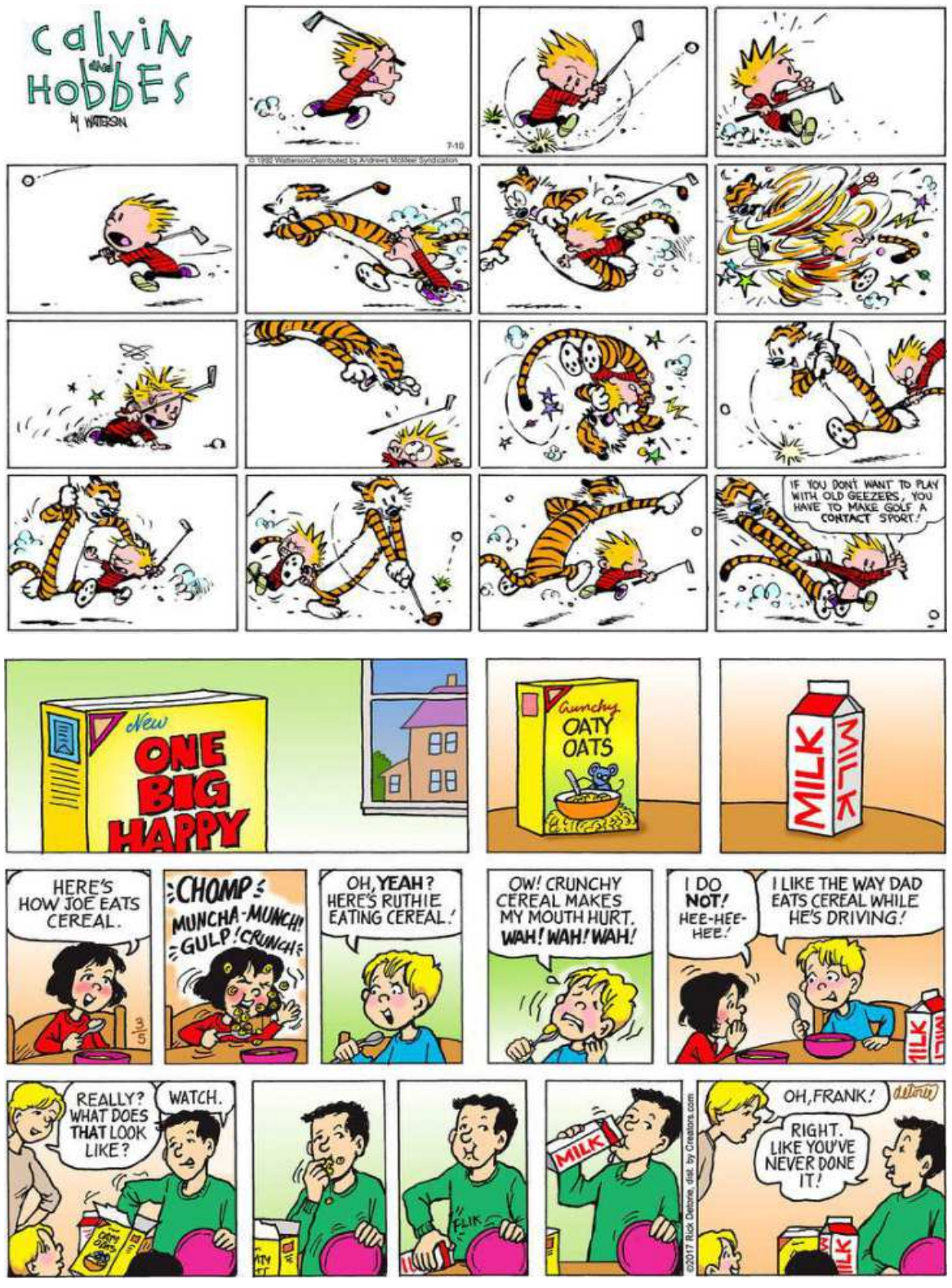
An annual event held in China, the Harbin Ice and Snow Festival is one of the world's largest winter festivals, renowned for its magnificent sculptures and architecture all made of ice, and vibrant winter activities. The festival typically begins in early January and lasts for about a month, showcasing a wonderland of intricately carved sculptures, illuminated by colourful lights, creating a magical spectacle. Visitors can explore ice castles, sculptures of famous landmarks, participate in ice-related activities, and enjoy various cultural events during this winter extravaganza.

In fact, apart from hosting this festival, the city is renowned as the ice-carving capital of China. Skilled artisans create magnificent ice sculptures throughout the year. Harbin introduced the first tram system in China in 1899, making it a pioneer in public transportation in the country.



Photos: Getty Images/ iStock'kPhoto

## GARFIELD







To subscribe online,
visit
www.thehindu.com/youngworld

You can also fill in the details below along with a cheque or a DD for a sum of Rs.349* payable at Chennai favouring "THG Publishing Private Limited" and send it to

The Hindu Group,
S&D (Circulation) Department,
Kasturi Buildings, 859&860 Anna Salai,
Chennai 600 002

Parent Name (Subscriber) Mr/Ms.....
Child Name .....Age.....
Address.....
.....
.....
City..... Pin.....
Mobile.....
E–mail.....

*Terms & Conditions apply

*Rs.260 for an annual subscription + Rs.89 for postal charges

Reach Customer care @
1800 102 1878 customercare@thehindu.co.in
Follow us on @thehinduyw

### SOLUTIONS

**Quiz Whizz:** 1. Mercury, Venus; 2. Mahabaleshwar; 3. Dragon; 4. Gymnastics; 5. They are the only mammals to truly fly; 6. Hawaii, the U.S.

**Correction:** The drawing attributed to Thanmay Sudeesh in the December 15 edition of Young World is by Rushi Krishna U., III, Prerana Waldorf School, Hyderabad, Telangana. The error is regretted.

### Sudoku

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| 2 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 1 |
| 6 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 4 |
| 3 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 5 |
| 4 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| 1 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 6 |

### Crossword for you

Air Surcharge as applicable: Manipur - Rs. 4/-

THE HINDU

**Disclaimer:** Readers are requested to verify & make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at Kasturi Buildings, 859-860, Anna Salai, Chennai-600002 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., and Printed by Ra Babu Vijay at THG PUBLISHING PVT.LTD. Plot B-6 & B-7, CMDA Industrial Complex, Maraimalai Nagar, Chengalpattu Taluk, Chengalpattu Dist., Pin: 603209. Editor: Suresh Nambath
Registered: TN/ARD/92/2023-2025 • RNI No. TNENG/2014/57758
Postal Subscription copies - posted at Egmore RMS/1 Patrika Channel on every Tuesday.