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AITS preserves tribal heritage

Yachi Jebisow

The efforts of Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies (AITS) in preserving the state's heritage has been receiving appreciation from the country, as the region undergoes rapid modernisation in recent years. With the loss of traditional ways of life and the erosion of cultural practices, the institute's efforts to document the rich heritage is increasingly crucial, said Zilpha Modi, an assistant professor at the Rajiv Gandhi University of Arunachal Pradesh.

There's been an erosion in the tribal studies and culture, thus, AITS aims to promote greater understanding and awareness of the unique customs, traditions, and social practices of the tribes of the state. It researches various aspects of tribal life, including language, history, folklore, and traditional knowledge systems.

Speaking to The Beacon, Modi said, "As the world becomes more interconnected, the work of institutions like AITS becomes even more important. By preserving the cultural heritage of the tribes, the institute is contributing not only to the preservation of an important part of India's history but also to the promotion of greater understanding and appreciation of the diversity of human culture."

The institute has also been involved in promoting research and education in the field of tribal studies. It has been working towards the documentation and preservation of unique cultural traditions.

A small business with a big heart

Dhamini D

Social media is causing a major shift in the field of veganism and sustainability. Creators and influencers talking about veganism and zero-waste living helps the information disseminate faster, expressed Vyshnavi Gudivada, the first vegan blogger of Hyderabad.

Working towards breaking the stereotypes associated with eco-friendly living, Gudivada, the founder of Eco Studio India, strives to provide affordable zero-waste products to

Government eases costs for medicines

Nikita Priya

Amid the growing concerns over the affordability of medication and dietary supplements for vulnerable populations, the government has announced a significant move towards improving healthcare outcomes. It has been decided to completely remove customs duty on imported drugs and food for special medical purposes and for personal use, said Dr Kumar Shambhav, a physician in All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS).

On March 30, the Central Government of India granted a comprehensive waiver on basic customs duty for drugs and food intended for personal use in the treatment of all rare diseases listed under the National Policy for Rare Diseases 2021. The exemption comes



Representational Image

in the form of a general notification and applies to all such imports. This move aims to improve access to treatment for rare diseases, a long-standing issue in the country.

Dr Shambhav explained, "Individuals suffering from specific medical conditions like allergies, digestive or

metabolic disorders require specific drugs and foods that are not easily accessible in India. The high prices of such products, combined with import duties, have resulted in many patients facing challenges in receiving the appropriate medical care they require."

Dr Shambhav added that

the decision will also lead to an ease in financial burden. "Patients often have to make difficult choices between purchasing medication and other essential items, such as food and shelter. The removal of customs duty will reduce the financial burden on patients, allowing them to focus on their health

and wellbeing," he said.

He raised concerns about the potential impact on the local pharmaceutical industry. "This may lead to a reduction in demand for locally produced medication and dietary supplements, which could have an adverse impact on the local pharmaceutical industry."

He stressed the importance of preserving the quality and efficient distribution of imported specialised medical products to the patients who need them the most. A system is crucial to ensure that these products reach patients in remote areas.

He also shared his ideas on the actions the government should take including increasing financing for research and development of new pharmaceuticals, in addition to exempting import duties on these products.

Kalakshetra calls for staff dismissal

Jeba Janet

Demanding justice for sexual harassment, the Kalakshetra Foundation students held a protest on Thursday at Rukmani College of Fine Arts, Chennai. One of their pleas included dismissing the four male faculty members who were accused of harassment.

On March 19, two students from the foundation filed a harassment complaint to the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC). To investigate this case, National Commission for Women (NCW) personnel visited the campus on March 22. But due to lack of confidence in the investigation



Kalakshetra students protesting in campus

India Today

done by the authorities, the students began the protest at the campus on Thursday.

Speaking to The Beacon, Mridhula, a member of the Central Committee from the Student Federation of India (SFI), said, "After the Kalakshetra's former female director's tweet about harassment, all the

students began to speak out." She mentioned that she herself was a victim of this harassment. The four male staff members were also accused of body shaming and verbal abuse. The post was deleted later.

"When I spoke to the students during the protest, they said that there have been

different kinds of harassment occurring since 2008. When we raised a complaint about the harassment, we were manipulated to withdraw the case and were also sent to the other college competitions with the same faculty," she said.

The state's NCW personnel determined there to be between 90-100 cases after looking into every student's inquiries. The NCW personnel stated that they had spoken to all of the students regarding the incident and would take all necessary legal action to put an end to the harassment and administer justice to the students.

AI art to extend boundaries

Bibhash Kalita

Artificial Intelligence (AI) art has made a significant impact in the field, by pushing the boundaries of what is possible in the realm of art, said Chinmay Barma, a notable artist and film director.

In recent years, there were several advancements in AI art. With these algorithm generators, digital art has become more accessible and affordable than ever before. This has led to a significant debate within the community about its potential to replace the traditional forms of art.

Speaking to The Beacon, Barma said that the traditional art forms will never be replaced by AI art. Although it may have the potential to create something new with an idea, traditional artists can infuse their pieces with their own experiences, feelings, and perspectives. "The emotional and creative exertion of producing something with one's hands is incomparable to something created by algorithms," he said.

The debate over artificial intelligence's ability to match human artistic expression continues. While some argue that it has the potential to be revolutionary, others argue that it lacks the emotional depth of human art.

Namma metro for namma fans

Shariq Ahamed

BENGALURU: In view of the Indian Premier League (IPL), Namma Metro has decided to extend its services to assist the match-going fans, and handle additional passenger rush on the matchdays.

On March 31, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) issued a press release announcing the extension of Namma Metro services on both purple and green lines. This decision is only applicable on the nights M Chinnaswamy Stadium hosts IPL matches which are

on - April 2, 10, 17, 26, and May 21.

According to the press release, the metro services running from Baiyappanahalli to Kengeri and Nagasandra to Silk Institute will be extended until 1 am. Additionally, the last train from the Majestic metro station will depart at 1:30 am towards all directions.

For the convenience of the public, Namma Metro will provide paper tickets for return journeys, which can be purchased well in advance from any metro station, starting from 3 pm on the scheduled matchdays.