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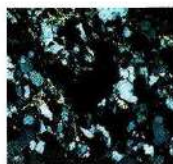
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সূচিপত্র

প্রচ্ছদকাহিনি

তমসো মা জ্যোতির্গময়



দেবী আসছেন। অকালবোধন বলি আমরা এ দুর্গোৎসবকে। কিন্তু এবার যেন অকাল আক্ষরিক অর্থেই। অস্থির, অস্বস্তিকর সময়। ধর্ষণ-হত্যা, দুর্নীতি, প্রশাসনিক ব্যর্থতা ও দ্বিচারিতা, শাসকের ঔদ্ধত্যের সামনে দাঁড়িয়ে আছে সাধারণ মানুষ, তাদের আন্তরিক প্রতিবাদ। দেবী আঁধারময়তা দূর করুন, বিচারের পাশাপাশি এ-ও এবারের চাওয়া।

লিখছেন বিনায়ক বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়, তমাল বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়
এবং যশোধরা রায়চৌধুরী।

প্রবন্ধ



চশমার ঝাপসা সরণি

মানুষ যত প্রাচীন, চালশেও নাকি ততটাই প্রাচীন। কিন্তু চশমা? হাতের নাগালে আছে বলেই বোধহয় তাকে সম্যক জানি না আমরা। কিন্তু নিছক প্রযুক্তি বলেও গণ্য হয় না চশমা। লিখছেন সীমন্তিনী ভট্টাচার্য্য।

শেষকথা



এত সব যাচ্ছে কোথায়?

কলকাতার ট্রাম? তার মধ্যে আছে গদাই লঙ্করি চাল। তবে আছে আন্তরিকতাও। অনেকটা কলকাতার বাঙালির মতো। অভিজাত, কিন্তু আলগোছে। লিখছেন অঞ্জন দত্ত।

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মূল্য: পঁয়ত্রিশ টাকা

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থেকে প্রকাশিত এবং আনন্দ অফসেট প্রাঃ লিঃ সিপি-৪, সেক্টর ফাইভ, সল্ট লেক সিটি,
কলকাতা ৭০০০৯১ থেকে মুদ্রিত।
বিমান মাশুল : ১.০০ টাকা (আন্দামান, মণিপুর, ত্রিপুরা ও অসম)

এই পত্রিকায় প্রকাশিত বিজ্ঞাপনের বক্তব্য ও বিষয়বস্তু সম্পর্কিত কোনও দায় পত্রিকা কর্তৃপক্ষের নয়।
প্রকাশিত কোনও লেখা বা ছবি, সম্পূর্ণ বা আংশিকভাবে, সোশ্যাল মিডিয়ায় আপলোড করা বাঞ্ছনীয় নয়।

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সূচিপত্র

প্রচ্ছদ কাহিনি

হতশ্রী



সমুদ্র মন্থনকালে লক্ষ্মীর উত্থান। পুরাণের পাতা থেকে লোকায়ত জীবন, সর্বত্রই বিরাজমান তিনি। কেবল ধন-ঐশ্বর্যের দেবী হিসেবে নন, লক্ষ্মী সুখ-সমৃদ্ধি ও সুন্দরেরও প্রতীক। সভ্যতার আদি পর্ব থেকে আবহমান কাল ধরে এই প্রতীকের অস্তরালে থেকেছে লক্ষ্মীর উপস্থিতি। বর্তমানে এই রাজ্যের নানা ক্ষেত্রে শ্রী বা লক্ষ্মীভাব আজ অপস্রিয়মাণ। অন্য দিকে রাজ্যের মেয়েদের দুর্দশাও ক্রমবর্ধমান। তা হলে এ-রাজ্যের ঘরে এবং বাইরে লক্ষ্মীর অবস্থান কোথায়? লিখছেন স্বপ্নময় চক্রবর্তী, তিলোত্তমা মজুমদার এবং পায়েল সেনগুপ্ত।

প্রবন্ধ

পান্থজন ও তাঁর সখা

নতুন পথের খোঁজে অক্লান্ত এই পথিক জীবনসায়াহে পৌঁছেও পড়তে চাইছেন কবিতায় আধুনিকতার কম্পাস! লিখছেন চম্পাকলি আইয়ুব এবং পূষন আইয়ুব।



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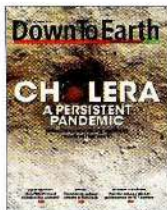
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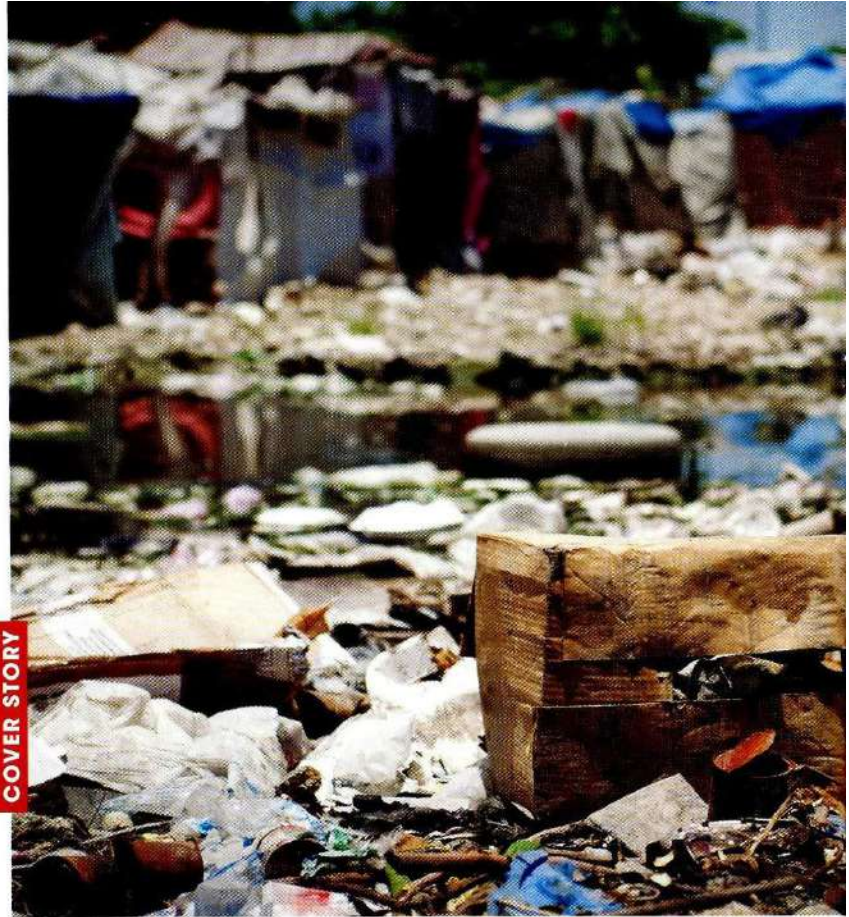
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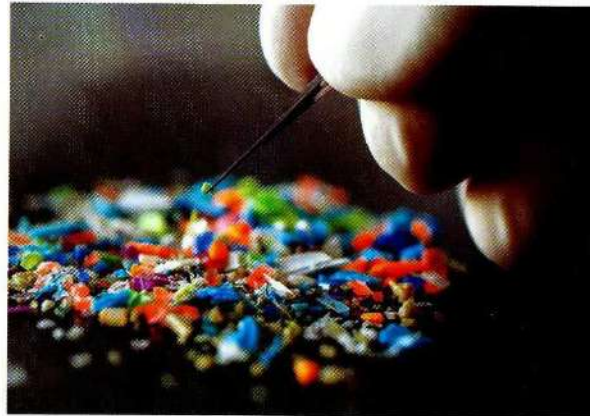


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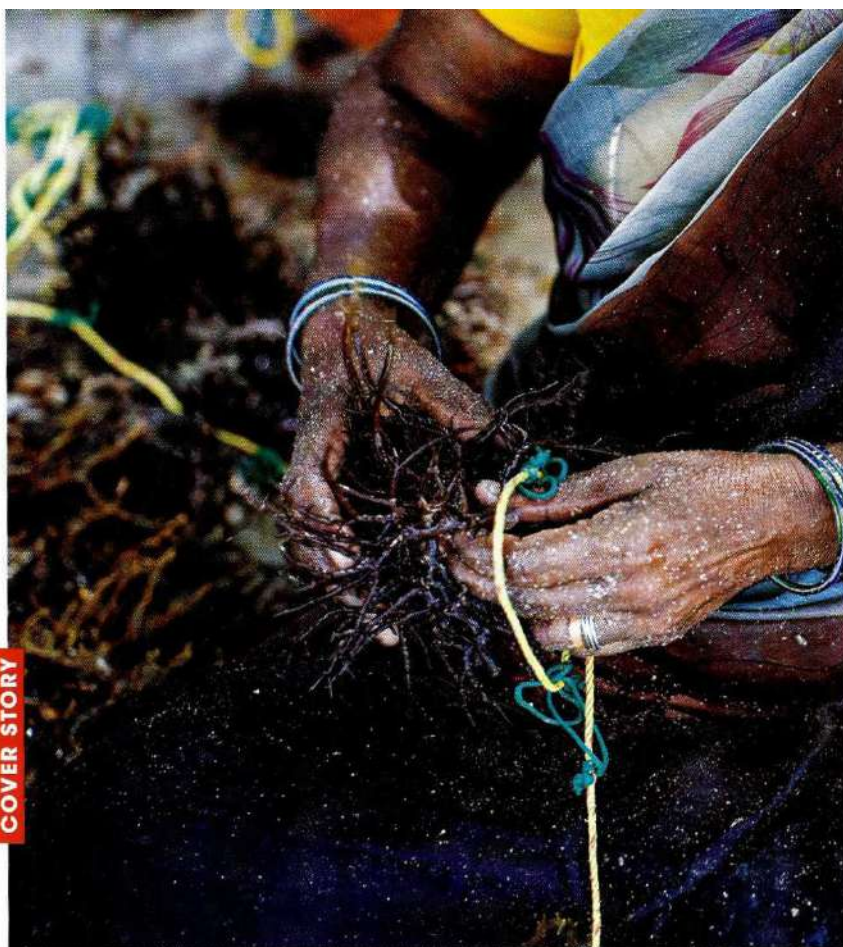
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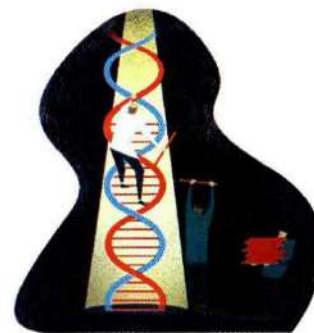
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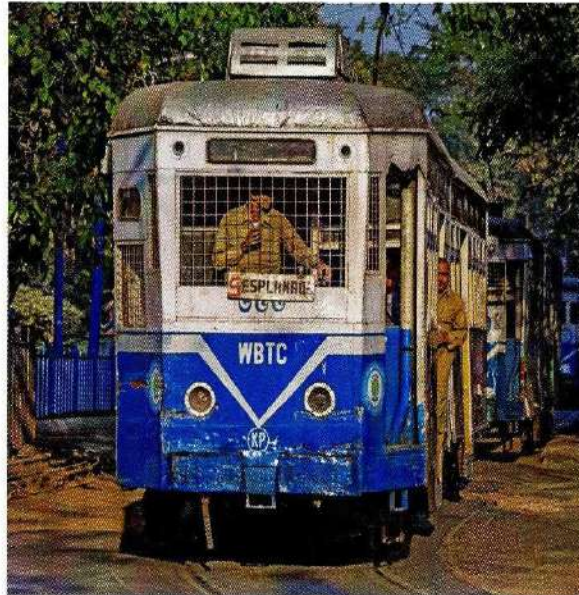


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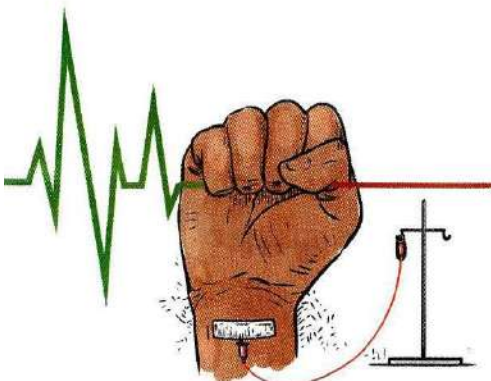
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12 The 2024 election results in Kerala reflect a significant political shift, highlighted by the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party, waning political bipolarity and growing acceptance of a pan-Hindu consolidation. — *Sarath Sasikumar, Balu Sunilraj*

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17 This article explores the Bharatiya Janata Party's relative success in Tamil Nadu, and the decline of the Dravidian parties' combined vote share. It examines whether this indicates the erosion of Dravidian hegemony and the emergence of a "Hindu vote bank." — *Arun Kumar G*

A Tale of Telugu States

21 The rise of the Congress in Telangana and the Telugu Desam Party-led alliance in Andhra Pradesh has significantly altered the political landscape in the Telugu states. Electoral developments have made the political space crowded in both states. — *Vikram Mukka*

Dissecting the Results in Sikar and Bharatpur

27 The general election results in two parliamentary seats in Rajasthan generated special interest. In Sikar, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) candidate won with the Congress's support, and the Bharatpur constituency sent one of the youngest members of Parliament to the 18th Lok Sabha. — *Akhil Alha*

The 2024 General Election in Haryana

30 The even division of seats in between the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Congress in Haryana indicates a clear bipolar contest between the two parties. — *Rashmi Singh*

Charging Hindutva, Churning Narratives

36 While the general elections of 2024 have entailed a mammoth victory for the Bharatiya Janata Party and its allies in Assam, this mandate has sparked curious insinuations about a narrative shift in state politics. — *Akhil Ranjan Dutta, Gaurav Das*

Between Resistance and Participation

39 After long being missing from the high corridor of electoral politics in Nagaland, the Congress has managed to defeat the formidable force of the ruling conglomerate led by the Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party. — *Ngoru Nixon, Kevilenuo Tapa & Salikyu Sangtam*

Strategic Autonomy in National Security

51 India's strategic autonomy in national security is severely constrained due to the perspectives of the Indo-Pacific think tanks with corporate interests that dominate New Delhi's policymaking circles. — *Jawahar Bhagwat*

Fiscal Decentralisation

57 This paper examines the composition and functions of the Odisha State Finance Commissions and their efficacy in supporting a common minimum level of public goods in the state. The analysis highlights several drawbacks which warrant a restructuring of the composition of the commission. The current regressive nature of revenue sharing should be revised. — *Pareswar Sahu*

Regional Disparities in Health Deprivation

64 Spatial disparities in health deprivation across 19 major Indian states are examined. The results show that most central Indian states are acutely health-deprived, while the northern (except Uttar Pradesh) and southern regions of the country perform better. — *Priyabrata Sahoo, Soumyabrata Mondal & Vinay Kumar*

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That the sound of the screams of Palestinian people is not deemed genuine or urgent enough indicates a "socially induced hearing impairment" that leads to the denial of Israel's evident obliteration of Gaza. [page 29](#)

Climate Financing

The advanced economies have not provided money to climate action needs from their budgets and have yet to do much to channel private finance for this cause, despite controlling the international financial flows. [page 55](#)

Gender Question in Gig Economy

Women gig workers need an enabling production environment where masculinity itself is called into question and women's discussions about productivity and efforts at skill-building are not reduced to a perception of "gossip sessions." [page 32](#)

Agitation against Farm Laws

The disjunction of the farm laws with the realities of the continued significance of agriculture as a source of livelihood and its growing precarity explains their debacle. [page 43](#)

Nobel Prize in Economics

To understand how AJR managed to integrate colonialism into economics without addressing capitalist dynamics of uneven development, we need to go back to the colonial origins of economics. [page 22](#)

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Gig Workers under the POSH Act

- 10 In the prevailing legal uncertainty over whether gig workers are “employees” of the platform they work on, a recent High Court of Karnataka’s judgment has provided much clarity. — *Alok Prasanna Kumar*

Karnataka and Rajasthan Legislations on Gig Work

- 13 Gig workers lack protection under the existing labour laws as employment relation in gig work is contentious. Gig companies consider themselves as aggregators and term workers as independent contractors. — *Kingshuk Sarkar*

Partition Refugees in Jammu

- 18 After the lapse of five years of the abrogation of Article 370, West Pakistan refugees have started feeling disillusioned and are demanding protection of lands and jobs. — *Marvi Slathia, Akshay Kumar*

The Colonial Origins of Economics

- 22 By providing an easy “answer” to the complex process of development, albeit a wrong one, Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson’s rise to prominence has lent support to a Eurocentric and arguably racist understanding of development. — *Ingrid Harvold Kvangraven, Surbhi Kesar & Devika Dutt*

The Rise of the Nondescript

- 26 A close look at the Periodic Labour Force Survey data reveals a definite increase in the participation of women, especially in rural India. This optimism fades as this has occurred mostly in the low-end and uncertain self-employed category. — *Keshab Das, Puneet Kumar Shrivastav*

Sound in Palestine

- 29 Locating the sociality of sound and the act of political listening in the case of the ongoing genocide, it is argued that listening, in the truest sense, is a political act that shapes our experience of the social. — *Archisha Rai*

Patriarchal Discrimination and Capitalist Relations

- 32 With the growing feminisation of the gig economy, this article tries to understand how the gig economy has structural gendered problems and how things might evolve with policies and practices. — *Govind Kelkar*

State versus Peasants

- 43 Using a political-economy perspective, the article attempts to understand the true nature of the (repealed) farm laws and the agitation. — *H S Shylendra*

An Index of Public Financial Management

- 51 The article presents a composite index of public financial management by states, assimilating various important indicators over the last 10 years. — *Govind Bhattacharjee, Meghna Agarwal*

Financing Green Economies

- 55 As public debt is unsustainably high globally, the headroom for borrowing by the governments has shrunk. Private capital can only meet green financing needs marginally. Infrastructure Investment Trusts are a promising solution, offering public-private finance circularity. — *Arvind Mayaram*

A Tribute to Ronald W Jones

- 63 This paper reflects upon how the 1971 specific factor model of Ronald W Jones still holds its relevance in the face of growing within-country income inequality and underlying political tensions causing protectionist trends to make their way back slowly in many developing countries, including India. — *Shrimoyee Ganguly, Rajat Acharyya*

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- 71 *Bipasha Mandal* and *Smriti Singh* on caste oppression and power dynamics in *Bramayugam*; *Sana Shah* on questions of memory and selfhood in *Three of Us*; *Paromita Patranobish* on commoning and commemoration in *Vesper*; and Last Lines by *Ponnappa*.

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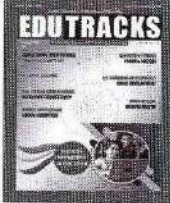
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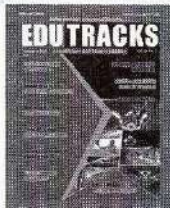
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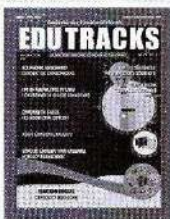
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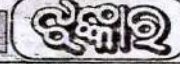
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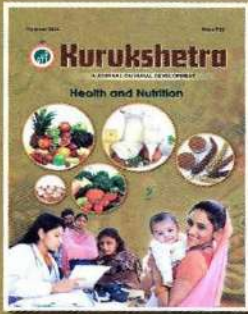
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‘କଥା’ର ଏହି ନବପ୍ରତିଭା ବିଶେଷାଙ୍କରେ ଦଶ ଜଣ ନୂଆ ଗାଳ୍ପିକଙ୍କ ଗଳ୍ପ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଉଛି। ଚଳିତ ବର୍ଷର ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗିତା ପାଇଁ ଆସିଥିବା ଦୁଇଶହ ଏକାଶୀ ଗଳ୍ପ ଭିତରୁ ଏହି ଦଶଟିକୁ ଯୋଗ୍ୟ ଗପ ଭାବେ ବାଛିଛନ୍ତି ଆମର ମାନନୀୟ ବିଚାରକମଣ୍ଡଳୀ। ଏମାନଙ୍କ ଭିତରେ କେହି ପ୍ରଥମ ନୁହେଁ କି କେହି ଦ୍ୱିତୀୟ ବା ତୃତୀୟ ନୁହେଁ। ଦଶଟିଯାକ ଗପ ନିର୍ବାଚିତ ଗପ।

‘କଥା’ର ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାତା ସମ୍ପାଦକ ଶ୍ରୀ ସୌମ୍ୟରଂଜନ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକଙ୍କ ପରିକଳ୍ପିତ ନବପ୍ରତିଭା ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗିତା ପ୍ରଥମେ ୧୯୯୦ ମସିହାରେ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇଥିଲା। ସେ ବର୍ଷ ୧୬ ଜଣ ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗୀ ଏଥିରେ ସଫଳ ହୋଇଥିଲେ। ତା’ପରେ ଦୁଇବର୍ଷ ଏହି ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗିତା ଆୟୋଜିତ ହୋଇପାରି ନ ଥିଲା। ୧୯୯୪ରୁ ଏହା ନିୟମିତ ଭାବେ ପ୍ରତି ବର୍ଷ ଆୟୋଜିତ ହୋଇ ୨୦୦୦ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଚାଲିଥିଲା। ସେଇଠାରୁ କେତେକ ସମସ୍ୟା ଯୋଗୁଁ ‘କଥା’ର ପ୍ରକାଶନ ଅନିୟମିତ ହୋଇପଡ଼ିଲା ଏବଂ ନବପ୍ରତିଭା ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗିତାର ଆୟୋଜନ ହୋଇପାରିଲା ନାହିଁ। ତେବେ ଦୀର୍ଘ ୧୨ ବର୍ଷର ବ୍ୟବଧାନ ପରେ ୨୦୧୧ରୁ ‘କଥା’ର ଏହି ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗିତା ନିୟମିତ ଭାବେ ଅନୁଷ୍ଠିତ ହେଉଛି ଏବଂ ଶ୍ରେଷ୍ଠ ଦଶଟି ଗଳ୍ପକୁ ନେଇ ଅକ୍ଟୋବର ମାସରେ ନବପ୍ରତିଭା ବିଶେଷାଙ୍କ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଉଛି। ଓଡ଼ିଆ ପତ୍ରପତ୍ରିକା ଜଗତ ପାଇଁ ଅକ୍ଟୋବର ଏକ ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ମାସ, ଏହାର କାରଣ ଏହି ମାସ ଦଶହରା ବା ପୂଜା ମାସ। ଏତେବେଳେ ଶହ ଶହ ପତ୍ରପତ୍ରିକା ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଆନ୍ତି, ଅଧିକାଂଶ ପୂଣି ସେମାନଙ୍କର ବିଶେଷାଙ୍କ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରନ୍ତି। ଆମେ ‘କଥା’ର ସବୁଠୁ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ପୂଜା ସଂଖ୍ୟାକୁ ‘ନବପ୍ରତିଭା ବିଶେଷାଙ୍କ’ ଭାବରେ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରି ଏଇ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା ଦେବାକୁ ଚେଷ୍ଟା କରୁଛୁ ଯେ ନବପ୍ରତିଭାର କଥାକାରମାନେ ଆମ କଥାକ୍ଷେତ୍ରର ନୂଆ ଫସଲ। ସେମାନେ ଯେତେ ସଫଳ ହେବେ, ପଲ୍ଲବିତ ହେବେ, ଆମ କଥାକ୍ଷେତ୍ର ସେତେ ସୁନ୍ଦର ଦିଶିବ। ଏହି ଅବସରରେ ଚଳିତବର୍ଷ ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗିତାର ବିଚାରକ ଥିବା ସୁପରିଚିତ ତିନି ଲେଖକ ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ଗୋଲାପ ମଞ୍ଜରୀ କର, ଶ୍ରୀ ଜଗନ୍ନାଥ ଦାଶ ଏବଂ ଶ୍ରୀ ସହଦେବ ସାହୁଙ୍କୁ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ସହଯୋଗ ଲାଗି କୃତଜ୍ଞତା ଜଣାଉଛୁ। ନବପ୍ରତିଭାମାନଙ୍କର ଗଳ୍ପ ସାଙ୍ଗକୁ ଚଳିତ ବର୍ଷର ଏହି ବିଶେଷାଙ୍କରେ କଥାକାର ବାଦଲ ମହାନ୍ତିଙ୍କର ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଉପନ୍ୟାସ ‘ବୁଲାଇଁ’ ପ୍ରକାଶ ପାଉଛି। ଆଶା, ପାଠକଙ୍କୁ ଭଲ ଲାଗିବ। ‘କଥା’ର ନବପ୍ରତିଭାମାନଙ୍କୁ ଶାରଦୀୟ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ ଏବଂ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ସୁଦୀର୍ଘ ଓ ସଫଳ ସାରସ୍ୱତ ଯାତ୍ରା ପାଇଁ ଅଶେଷ ଶୁଭ କାମନା।

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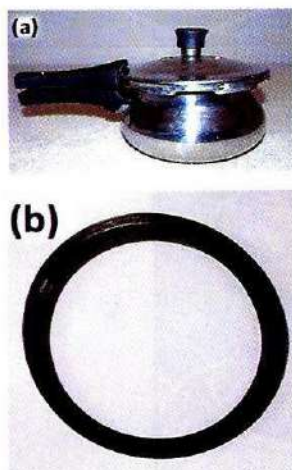
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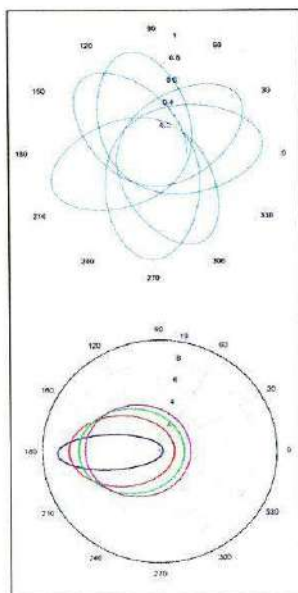
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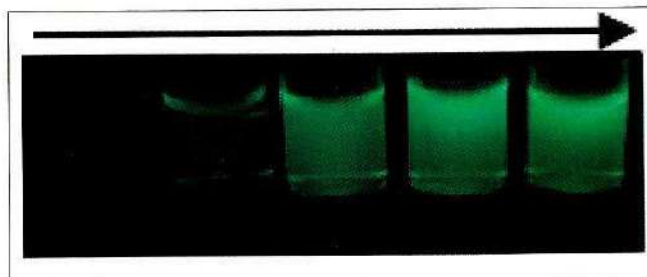
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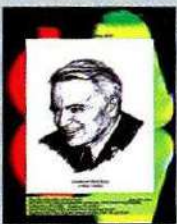
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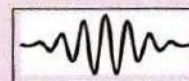
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Gerhard Herzberg
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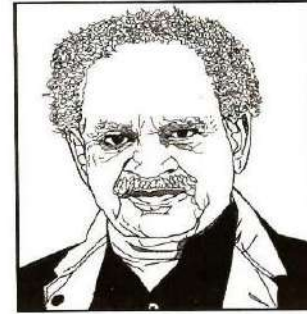
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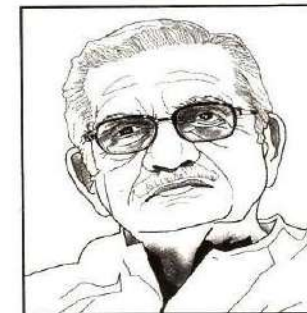
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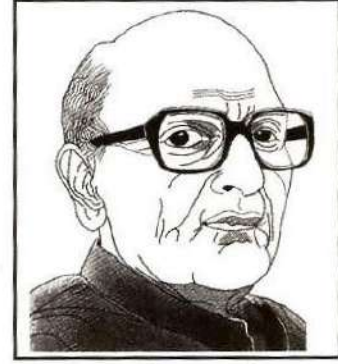
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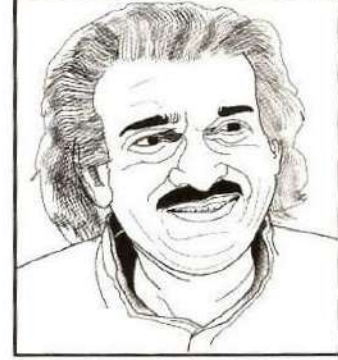
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मासिक

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता ४/३८

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Front cover: Monica Yadav's start-up Respire Experiential Learning transforms traditional science labs into dynamic STEM labs. Photograph courtesy Monica Yadav.

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IVLP alumna Monica Yadav's start-up is helping young students thrive through hands-on learning tools.


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Digital Transformation in Higher Education

Priya Rao* and Nitin M Rane**

The digital transformation of higher education is rapidly reshaping the learning and teaching landscape. In 2024, this evolution is anticipated to accelerate further, driven by emerging technologies and innovations aimed at enhancing the educational experience. Online learning stands out as a prominent trend in higher education's digital transformation. Offering students flexibility and affordability, online learning allows them to learn at their own pace and schedule. This trend is expected to continue growing in 2024, with more universities offering online courses and programs to meet the diverse needs of learners.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is another key trend shaping higher education. AI applications personalize learning experiences, provide feedback to students, and also assist in grading assignments. In 2024, AI is forecasted to become more sophisticated and widely integrated into higher education, revolutionizing how students learn and educators teach. The digital transformation of higher education presents both challenges and opportunities. However, by embracing new technologies and innovations, universities can create more engaging and effective learning experiences for students. As this field continues to evolve, higher education institutions must remain agile and proactive in adapting to the changing landscape to best serve the needs of their students and educators alike.

The digital transformation of higher education integrates eLearning technologies and offers innovative solutions to traditional learning challenges. Students can access a greater range of instructional resources and instructors through eLearning. E-learning allows students to obtain access to a variety of course offerings and expertise. It is useful for students who want to study a specific topic or field but have no access to it at their local college or institution.

Sorts of eLearning

Digital eLearning is available in several types of methods on college campuses including the following methods.

Adaptive and Fixed eLearning

Fixed eLearning, also known as linear or static eLearning, follows a predetermined structure where all learners progress through the same content uniformly. Adaptive eLearning, on the other hand, tailors the learning experience to individual learner needs, adjusting content, pace, and difficulty level based on learner performance, preferences, and proficiency

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Higher Education in National Education Policy and Gandhian Higher Education Perspectives

Sudarshan Iyengar*

In this brief article, I propose to comment on the National Education Policy-2020 in the context of alternative education perspectives. The perspective of the Policy is described in the first section titled Introduction. The NEP-2020 has laid down 22 fundamental principles. The Vision follows it. The rest of the document discusses preschool, school, and higher education structures subjects, and pedagogy. I have limited my comments to the content discussed in the Introduction including the principles and the vision vis-à-vis the Gandhian and other alternative visions.

NEP-2020 is a unique policy in the history of Education policies in Independent India. From 1949 onwards many education policies have been prepared and submitted to the Government of India. None have been received and owned up so completely as the NEP 2020. The force with which the central government is directing the state governments to implement that some of them have revolted and have initiated a process to amend the Constitution to restore Education as a state subject instead of its inclusion in the concurrent list. Most previous education policy documents have received scanty or inadequate attention from the central and state governments. The Kothari Commission Report (1964-66) by the Ministry of Education, Government of India was the first comprehensive report on education that dealt with school and university education and came up with the most constructive policy recommendations. The report seriously revisited Gandhiji's Nai Talim, Aurobindo's education philosophy, and other original educational initiatives that challenged the 'Macaulay System' of education prevalent throughout the country. The important recommendations included compulsory vocational education in the school curriculum, education on morals and religion, and university autonomy. The recommendations if accepted and implemented in spirit would have brought back Gandhian education philosophy and pedagogy in India's school and university education. It must be noted, however, that the Policy resolution made by the government based on the Kothari Commission Report noted, "Gandhiji formulated the scheme of Basic Education seeking to harmonize intellectual and manual work. This was a great step forward in making education directly relevant to the lives of the people. Many other national leaders likewise made important contributions to national education before independence."¹ The Report recommended setting up Basic Education Schools for teachers training leaving them under the state governments. The recommendation was based on the model working in Gujarat. However, it did not find a place in the policy.

* Former Vice Chancellor, Gujarat, Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. E-mail: vc@gujaratvidyapith.org, Sudarshan54@gmail.com

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The Concept of Cluster Colleges and the Importance of Collaboration

M S Kurhade*

"In my mind, teaching is not merely a life work, a profession, an occupation or a struggle, but a passion. I love to teach as a painter loves to paint, as a musician loves to play, as a singer loves to sing, and as a strong man rejoices to run a race".

—William Lyon (1970).

The article aims to look at issues related to university and college planning and management for both short-term and long term. The concept of university and college planning and management envisages the involvement of university authorities and principals, faculty, administrative staff, students, parents, management of the private education society, and government, considering the constraints to identify the difficulties in taking corrective measures. It is a fact that anything done in a systematic manner and as per the prescribed norms yields much better results rather than something done haphazardly.

The idea of the developmental plan for a university and college envisages a perspective plan prepared by an expert committee to provide educational facilities to the learners, faculty and administrative staff and provision of required resources to improve the skill and knowledge of the learners. Kothari Commission (1964-66) said that "No comprehensive programme of educational development can ever be put across unless it involves every factor connected with it – its teacher, students and local community." It means decentralising college planning and management at the college level forms a strong base for quality education and permits the active participation of all stakeholders.

A compressive perspective plan of the college's inconsonance with the University Perspective Plan for 5/10 years ensuring the required facilities for the academic and administrative progress of the college helps academic, administrative and infrastructural growth, and enables colleges to foster excellence in curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities.

A university and college are vital nodes in society, and the youth who enter these portals as learners today will be the builders of the nation tomorrow. A university and college are both busy hubs of activities, a training camp for the future and, at the same time, a microcosm of the wider life outside the precincts of the campus. Keeping all these definitions of a university and college in mind, the planning and management help a tangible vision of the university and

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National Institutional Ranking Framework Perception Score: A Storm in a Teacup?

M Bhaskara Rao*

*Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?**Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?*T.S. Eliot, *The Rock* (1934)

Academicians, administrators, policy-makers, regulators, researchers, journalists, and others have a paradoxical relationship with rankings. Rankings are good as they are informative and objective. Rankings are bad as they are biased and subjective. Worse, sometimes rankings are alleged to be rigged, managed, or manipulated. The foundation for rankings, as is known, is comparisons. Institutions would like to compare themselves with peers to determine who is good at teaching-learning, research, student outcomes, inclusivity, sustainable practices, and perception or reputation. Deep down, our passion for ranking is driven by our love for comparisons. Thus, whether we like rankings or not, they are here to stay. Yet, we fear rankings. Question their objectivity. Question their meaning – whether it reflects an institution's real standing, values, and achievements.

After the announcement of India Rankings 2024, a storm is brewing in a teacup on perception scores. Criticism is pouring on perception scores, and some are even casting aspersions on NIRF about the perception scores' veracity, transparency, and objectivity. NIRF has relatively less weightage for perception or reputation scores, i.e., 10 percent. This is against 45 percent in the QS World University Rankings for Academic and Employer reputation scores and the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 33 percent. The process followed by NIRF is as transparent as that of the QS and the THE. The weightage for perception score in NIRF is thus far lower than that of international ranking agencies. Thus, the criticism of NIRF perception score by various stakeholders may not be entirely justified.

Then, why is this storm in a teacup?

Peer perception scores are inherently subjective. They can vary widely based on individual biases, bounded rationality of the respondents, limited information, or personal experiences rather than objective quality measures. Perception as a metric may not accurately reflect true academic or institutional excellence, as it can be influenced by factors unrelated to educational quality, such as visibility or historical reputation. Nevertheless, it indicates the reputation enjoyed by the institution among academics and employers. Hence, a reputation or perception score as a part of the institution's ranking is welcome despite its subjectivity and variability.

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Enhancing Educational Excellence: The Crucial Role of Curricular Aspects

Yogeshchandra Sharma*

Worldwide higher educational institutions strive for excellence. In India, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is pivotal in ensuring quality and relevance. In the pursuit of educational excellence, the curricular aspects stand as cornerstone elements. This article delves into the significance of curricular aspects within the revamped NAAC Assessment and Accreditation Process. Examining the pivotal role of curricula in shaping educational outcomes, fostering innovation, and promoting academic rigor sheds light on the crucial interplay between curriculum design, implementation, and assessment methodologies. Furthermore, it explores how institutions can leverage curricular frameworks to align with NAAC's assessment criteria, enhance student learning experiences, and meet the evolving demands of the educational landscape. By embracing best practices, addressing challenges head-on, and capitalizing on emerging opportunities, educational institutions can foster an environment of excellence that prepares students for the complexities of the modern world. This work is a call to action for stakeholders to collaborate and innovate, ensuring that the curriculum remains a powerful tool for educational advancement and societal betterment. It urges the academic community to embark on a collective journey towards educational excellence.

Despite the implementation of several transformative policies and measures, the pursuit of 'Quality' and 'Relevance' in higher education within 'Bharat' remains a pressing concern. Recognizing the imperative to address these challenges, the National Education Policy of 1986 and the Programme of Action of 1992 delineated a strategic roadmap, advocating for the establishment of an independent national accreditation agency^{1,2}. In line with this call, the University Grants Commission (UGC) founded the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in 1994 in Bengaluru, Karnataka^{3,4}.

NAAC's inception marked a pivotal moment in the evolution of higher education in Bharat, embodying a vision and mission aimed at a paradigm shift in the educational landscape. Central to this transformative agenda is NAAC's commitment to amalgamating institutional self-assessment with external peer review mechanisms. At its core lies the Assessment and Accreditation (A&A) Framework, meticulously crafted to provide a structured approach towards fostering institutional self-improvement, nurturing a culture of innovation, and championing 'Academic Excellence' on a global scale⁴⁻⁶.

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