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WEB EDITION

NEWS IN BRIEF

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CELEB TALK

Hope literally sustains life: Anupam Kher

Actor Anupam Kher is confident that the world will survive the deadly coronavirus pandemic, and says all one needs to get through it is hope. The actor shared eight black and white pictures from 1918—the year when the world was battling the deadly Spanish Flu, also known as the 1918 flu pandemic. The 102-year-old pictures show men and women wearing face masks, face shields, and even gas masks, while in public places. Some are seen greeting each other, while maintaining social distancing. "Everything is the same, including the people, minus the wifi. But the world survived. So, this too shall pass. Hope literally sustains life," he added.



TECH BUZZ

Scrolling through Facebook at night to get simpler



After rolling out dark mode for its desktop website, Facebook has confirmed that it is testing dark mode for mobile. The feature has been made available to a small group of users globally.

■ The mobile version will cut down on glare, particularly, in low-light settings. This will be helpful for users staring at their screens well past midnight, scroll through the news feed as they struggle to fall asleep. Facebook did not mention a timeline for when it will roll out dark mode for all its users ■ The benefits of dark mode are two-fold. By letting users change the background colour of an app to black, it becomes easier to view and more aesthetically pleasing. Secondly, dark mode means that a large number of pixels on the screen will be off at any given point in time, thereby helping to preserve battery life

ENTERTAINMENT

Charles Randolph to make directorial debut with movie on Covid-19 pandemic

Oscar-winning scribe Charles Randolph is set to write, direct and produce a feature on the early stages of the coronavirus pandemic in China's Wuhan city. According to reports, SK Global will finance and produce the project. The film will examine "the dramatic weeks in China as the heroic medical community confronts a mysterious virus, soon to become a global pandemic." The writer, who penned Fox News drama, 'Bombshell', and won an Academy Award with Adam McKay for adapted screenplay for 'The Big Short', will be making his directorial debut with the yet-untitled Covid-19 movie. The project will be filmed in China, and other international locations with local crews.



SPORTS

English County C'ship to begin from Aug 1



The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has given its approval for the professional men's county cricket season to begin from August 1. The ECB release said formats to be played during the delayed men's county season are due to be agreed by the 18 first-class counties in early July, with a new fixture schedule to be published thereafter. A commitment to play women's domestic cricket in 2020 has also been made but may differ from the planned rollout of the new women's elite domestic structure.

MICROPLASTICS are contaminating the FRUIT and VEGETABLES we eat

The presence of microplastics are no longer confined to oceans, they have been discovered in apples, carrots, pears, broccoli and lettuce, claims a new study. According to scientists, root vegetables, including radishes, turnips and parsnips could also be contaminated with the man-made waste, prompting fears over the health impact. Microplastics have previously been identified in meats including, chicken, canned fish and shellfish.

Approximately 330 million tons of plastic were produced across the globe in 2015 alone, with large amounts likely ending up in the oceans and the world's water systems

DID YOU KNOW?



HOW DO THEY CONTAMINATE FRUITS & VEGGIES

- 1 Scientists believe that the tiny pollutants get sucked into plants' roots with water, and then travel up the stem into the leaves and fruits
- 2 Apples are the most contaminated fruits with microplastics, while carrots top as the most contaminated vegetable
- 3 Most microplastics are emitted either directly or via degradation of plastics to the terrestrial environment and accumulate in large amounts in soils, thus representing a potential threat to terrestrial ecosystems, the researchers said

X-PLAINED BLACKLISTING



What The apex court on Monday heard the pleas of foreigners, who were 'blacklisted' for attending a religious congregation at Delhi's Nizamuddin area.

Why A blacklist is a compilation of the names of all the Indian and foreign citizens against whom there's a 'look out circular' (LOC). Issued by the ministry of home affairs (MHA), the list is prepared by the foreigners division of the MHA, and is shared with all the Indian diplomatic missions as also with all the immigration check-points within India. It is done to stop the exit or entry of certain individuals, which could either be in their personal capacity or because they are associated with an organisation.

Who's Well, that's the interesting part—the blacklist is not in the public domain, so until and unless a person tries to enter or leave the country, he/she will not know if he/she is in the blacklist. Currently, there are about 30,000 people in the MHA blacklist, down from 38,000 in 2016.

How IS IT ISSUED: To place a person or an organisation in the blacklist, an LOC needs to be issued. This can be done only through a written request by the investigating officer or an agency addressed to an officer notified by the MHA, such as the deputy secretary or the above rank in the Centre, joint secretary or the above rank at the state level and other equivalent ranks in law enforcement and intelligence agencies. An LOC can only be issued against offences under the Indian Penal Code (IPC). There's no fixed period to determine the length of the blacklist period.

GENDER STEREOTYPES

Women under-represented in school textbooks: UNESCO

Women and girls are under-represented in school textbooks or when included are depicted in traditional roles in many countries across the globe, according to the Global Education Monitoring Report by the UNESCO. The report provides an in-depth analysis of key factors for exclusion of learners in education systems worldwide, including background, identity and ability, gender, age, location, poverty, disability, ethnicity, indigeneity, language, religion, migration or displacement status, sexual orientation or gender identity expression, incarceration, beliefs and attitudes.

- 1 The annual report points out that not only the number of images of female characters included in the textbooks is very less in comparison to images of males, women are also represented in "less prestigious" occupations, and as introverts and passive
- 2 Showing men as doctors and women as nurses; portraying women in subjects pertaining to food, fashion or entertainment; featuring women in voluntary roles and men in paid jobs, are among the gender stereotypes pointed out in the report. The report also takes note of attempts by few countries to revise the textbook images to reflect more gender balance.



SCIENTISTS SPOT RARE NEPTUNE-LIKE PLANET

Scientists have discovered a planet about as large as Neptune that circles a nearby star, which is still surrounded by a disk of debris left over from its formation. Using data from NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) and retired Spitzer Space Telescope, the discovery makes the system a touchstone for understanding how stars and planets form and evolve.

- Known as AU Mic for short, the planet is a cool red dwarf star with an age estimated at 20 million to 30 million years, making it a stellar infant compared to our sun, which is at least 150 times older
- The star is so young that it primarily shines from the heat generated, as its own gravity pulls it



SPACE

inward and compresses it. ■ Less than 10 per cent of the star's energy comes from the fusion of hydrogen into helium in its core, the process that powers stars like our sun. ■ The system is located 31.9 light years away in the southern constellation Microscopium

A SOLAR WATCH UNVEILED

NEW LAUNCH

American fashion brand Fossil has launched a new breed of eco-friendly sustainable watch called Solar Watch. The Solar Watch is globally available in a limited edition of 1,754 pieces. The watch will be priced at ₹9,995. The all-new watch will be available for purchase on Fossil.in and at select Fossil retail stores.

- The outer ring of the watch case acts as a solar panel, capturing light and converting it to energy, using a solar cell beneath the dial. It then stores the energy in a rechargeable battery that powers the movement of the watch



- Once fully-charged, the Solar Watch is expected to run for around four months, before a user will need to charge it again
- In addition to opting for a more sustainable, solar-powered movement, the Solar Watch comes equipped with five pull-through straps, which are made with yarn spun from approximately 16 plastic bottles—that is 16 fewer bottles in a landfill, or an ocean or a national park, and one step closer to a greener future

A BOOK FOR EVERY MOOD

AN AWARD WINNING ONE

Art is a verb
This art book for children recently won the bronze medal in the 'Interactive Children's Book Category' at the 2020 IPPY awards. The book aims to redefine visual art education in India through a combination of art and language-based activities to engage young readers



A TRENDING ONE

The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes by Suzanne Collins
This dystopian action-adventure novel is a prequel to 'The Hunger Games' trilogy. The novel focuses on the adventures of a teenage, Coriolanus Snow, who would become the dictatorial president of Panem by the events of the original trilogy



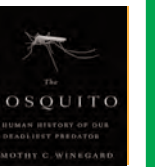
AN NYT BEST SELLER ONE

CIRCE by Madeline Miller
In this book, Zeus, the protagonist, banishes Helios' daughter to an island, where she must choose between living with gods or mortals.



A POP-SCIENCE ONE

THE MOSQUITO: A Human History of Our Deadliest Predator by Timothy C Winegard
One of those "eye-opening books that permanently shift your worldview", said Times reviewer Sam Kean about this book. It talks about how mosquitoes have "upended" history, including their "decisive" role in winning the American independence by decimating non-immune European troops



A CREATIVE ONE

Steal Like an Artist: 10 Things Nobody Told You About Being Creative by Austin Kleon
The book has tons of interesting activities to get your creative juices going

