



THE TIMES OF INDIA

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TODAY'S EDITION

With screen addiction among kids on the rise, an expert share tips on 'Active Parenting' approaches to address it **PAGE 2**



Times NIE reviewer tells us why Ruskin Bond's 'Angry River', woven around a young girl and nature is a must-read **PAGE 3**



No second thoughts about continuing with RCB, says Kohli **PAGE 4**



STUDENT EDITION

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2021



COVID OMICRON VARIANT: CONCERNING, NOT ALARMING



Following the emergence of the new Covid-19 variant 'Omicron', which has led to travel bans and new restrictions in many countries across the world, DG Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Dr Shekhar C Mande said that India is observing the situation in other countries, and added while the situation is a cause of concern, it is not alarming. "The surveillance is on like it always is. So, if the virus reaches India we will come to know. We are observing the situation in other countries like the Netherlands, Germany, and of course, hotspot South Africa and it is a bit concerning but I would not say alarming. It is concerning because it has accumulated a large number of mutations. The WHO has said 'Omicron' accumulated more than 30 mutations, 26 of which are unique in the spike protein which isn't observed in any other strains alpha, beta, gamma, delta or something like that," said Mande.

The Omicron variant (B.1.1.529), a new variant of the coronavirus, was first reported in Botswana on November 11, 2021, and appeared on November 14 in South Africa.

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TOP 3 BUZZ OF THE DAY

ECONOMY

India's Q2 GDP grows at 8.4% as economic activity recovers after second virus wave



India's GDP grew by 8.4% in the second quarter of current fiscal, as economic activity gradually inched towards normalcy after the second virus wave. The growth comes on the back of a low base in the same period last year when the economy had contracted by more than seven per cent. The bounce back in the second quarter is led by improvement in the sentiment owing to waning of Covid infections, rising vaccination rate and lifting of curbs.

No proposal to recognise Bitcoin as currency: Sitharaman

The Centre has no proposal to recognise Bitcoin as a currency in the country, Parliament was informed on Monday. Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha, also said that the government does not collect data on Bitcoin transactions. In the ongoing winter session of Parliament, the Centre aims to table the Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2021, through which it seeks a ban on all the private cryptocurrencies. At present, there is no regulation or ban in the country on cryptocurrency. The Reserve Bank of India has maintained its strong views against cryptocurrencies, saying they pose serious threats to macroeconomic and financial stability.



Bitcoin is a form of digital currency, which allows people to buy goods and services among others

BOOK

Smriti Irani turns author with 'Lal Salaam'



Bollywood actress-turned-politician, Smriti Zubin Irani has turned author with her debut novel 'Lal Salaam'. The Union minister's debut novel is based on the lives of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) officers serving the country in violence-hit areas. The novel's plot revolves around the massacre that unfolded in April 2010 in Dantewada in which 76 CRPF personnel were martyred.

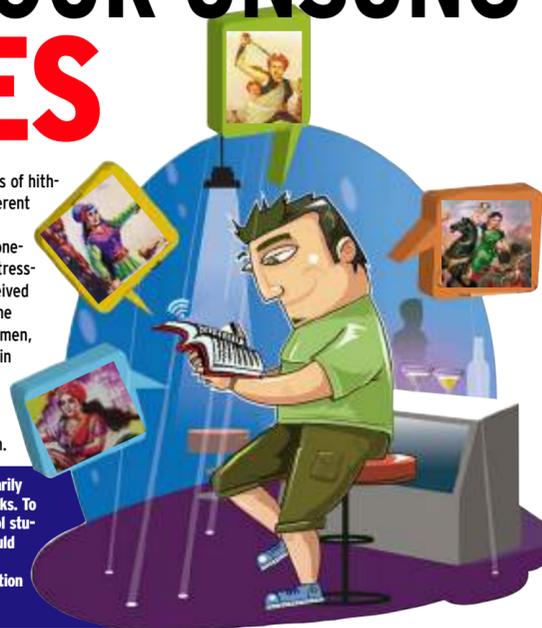
Publishing house Westland, in its release, described 'Lal Salaam' as the gripping tale of a "struggle against overwhelming odds, and of men and women who fight these odds with courage, ingenuity and resilience"

JUNK DISTORTIONS OF NATIONAL HEROES IN NCERT BOOKS: PARLIAMENTARY PANEL

SALUTE OUR UNSUNG HEROES

School textbooks should highlight the lives of hitherto unknown men and women from different states and districts, who have positively influenced national history, honour and oneness, says a parliamentary panel while stressing that NCERT should consider the suggestions received while framing the National Curriculum Framework. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth and Sports in its report on 'Reforms in Content and Design of School Text Books', also suggested to incorporate ancient wisdom, knowledge and teachings about life and society from the Vedas and other great Indian texts in the school curriculum.

The committee said, NCERT and SCERTs should primarily focus on providing core content through their textbooks. To maintain uniformity in educational standards of school students across the country, the education ministry should explore the possibility of developing a core class-wise common syllabus for various subjects for implementation by CBSE, CISCSE and various other state boards



MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

1 The 32-member committee's report focuses on "removing references to un-historical facts and distortions about national heroes, ensuring equal or proportionate references to all periods of Indian history and highlighting the role of great historic women achiev-

ers, including Gargi, Maitreyi, or rulers like Rani of Jhansi, Rani Channamma, Chand Bibi, Zalkari Bai"

2 It comes in the backdrop of revision of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF)

in the light of the New Education Policy-2020. The panel received approximately 20,000 representations from experts, individuals and organisations, pointing to discrepancies/omissions in school textbooks

Share your views at toinie175@gmail.com

WHAT HAPPENS ON THE INTERNET IN A MINUTE

Every minute on the internet, six million people are shopping online, while 57,500 tweets are being sent and 65,000 photos are being shared.

Every minute, Amazon customers spend \$283,000 (roughly ₹ 2.12 crore). That naturally means the shopping giant earns a lot of revenue, approximately \$955,517 per minute

Recently rechristened, Meta is the parent to WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram. As of today, the entire company nets \$213,628 per minute, thanks to Facebook Live receiving 44 million views every minute

Users stream 6,94,000 videos every minute on YouTube, Google's video service, while 5.7 million Google searches occur every minute netting Alphabet - the parent company - a neat \$4,33,014 in revenue, every minute

TRIVIA

Twitter bans sharing of photos without consent

Twitter launched new rules on Tuesday blocking users from sharing private images of other people without their consent, in a tightening of the network's policy just a day after it changed its CEO. Under the new rules, people who are not public figures can ask Twitter to take down pictures or video of them that they report were posted without permission.

The right of internet users to appeal to platforms when images or data about them are posted by third parties, especially for malicious purposes, has been debated for years.

Twitter already prohibited the publication of private information such as a person's phone number or address, but there are "growing concerns" about the use of content to "harass, intimidate and reveal the identities of individuals," Twitter said.

TECHAWAY



Rihanna declared national hero by Barbados



Singer Rihanna has been declared a national hero of Barbados, as the country celebrates its transition to an independent republic. "May you continue to shine like a diamond," the country's prime minister, Mia Mottley, said at an investiture ceremony for the pop singer, fashion icon and entrepreneur, in reference to her 2012 hit Diamonds. Mottley said, the superstar commanded "the imagination of the world through the pursuit of excellence with her creativity, her discipline, and above all else, her extraordinary commitment to the land of her birth".

Rihanna joins a select group of 10 other Barbadians, including Garfield Sobers, regarded as one of the greatest cricketers of all time and the only other living national hero

Rihanna is Barbados's most famous citizen and in 2018 was appointed an official ambassador for culture and youth. She has never softened her Bajan accent, and her music, while tapping into pop, R&B and dance music, has remained connected to her Caribbean heritage

TACKLING SCREEN ADDICTION

RamG Vallath

Over the last two months, I have delivered 14 parenting webinars and coached over 2000 parents on how to handle some of their most vexing parenting challenges using principles of Active Parenting. In pre-webinar surveys administered to these parents, the biggest issue that came up was screen addiction of children. Let me share the Active Parenting approaches that can help in mitigating this problem.

A powerful addiction to the screen — TV, tablet or phone — all deliver visual and auditory overload to the senses. They also have content designed to hook one's attention. This is why screen addiction is very real and difficult to overcome. This can lead to lack of focus, poor health, poor social skills and emotional outbursts. Here are some dos and don'ts to ensure children do not get addicted.

DOS

1. Set clear boundaries on screen time. Preferably nil screen time till the age of five and very limited time thereafter until high school
2. Create alternate entertainment for children through engaging experiences, preferably family experiences and activities
3. Take the trouble to explain in detail the reason for the restriction
4. Role model screen abstinence by reducing your own screen time and spend that time with children in fun activities

DON'TS

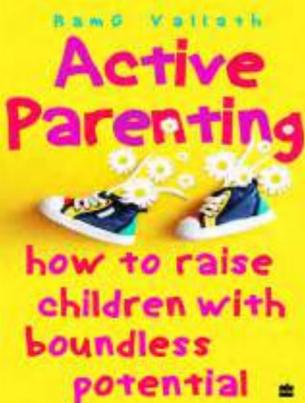
1. Do not thrust the boundaries down their throat without detailed explanation of the rationale
2. Do not ever use screen time as a diversion for feeding children in infancy or childhood
3. Do not give in to tantrums if children demand to be allowed more screen time. Be firm with the boundaries
4. Do not micromanage children's lives in any aspect. Give them as much autonomy as possible so that they believe you aren't unfairly controlling

SHARED FUN ACTIVITIES HOLD THE KEY

In order to keep children engaged and away from the screen, parents will need to be creative and invent fun family activities. Apart from engaging the children, these also help in strengthening the bond of friendship between parents and children. The stronger the bond and the trust that comes with it, the easier it would be to set boundaries.



RamG Vallath is an IITian, a tech company co-founder, a motivational speaker, and the author of the bestselling parenting book 'Active Parenting: How To Raise Children With Boundless Potential', published by HarperCollins India. For details, visit www.ramgvallath.com



Let's Just Talk It Out

Period



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It took a Bollywood movie 'Padman' and a macho 54-year-old actor to convince Indian men that 'it is okay to talk about menstruation openly' among your bros, and with sisters, mothers and lady friends, even if you personally have not undergone the experience of ostracism, shame, anxiety, and of course, the biological process yourself.

Even if you, as a man, have not witnessed gallons of blood flowing out of you every month, you can still give the process a thought. More so, those wired like nerds, as 'an engineering marvel of human body that enables a woman to give birth to more like you and more like them.'

So let's just talk about it. **TIMES NIE, IN CONVERSATION WITH GYNAECOLOGIST AND AUTHOR, DR DEEKSHA SINGH, TALKS ABOUT HOW WE NEED TO NORMALISE PERIOD CONVERSATION AMONG BOYS AND GIRLS.**



and make it as common as about talking, perhaps, what's happening around the world or the weather of the day. With her second book, 'It's All About Periods', Dr Singh is ready with her answers on why teens and parents must read this.

TO BEGIN WITH, HOW SHOULD PARENTS ADDRESS THE TOPIC OF MENSTRUATION TO TEENAGERS AND IS THERE A RIGHT AGE WHEN PARENTS CAN TALK ABOUT IT?

I meet a lot of young adults everyday and I know growing up is a challenging and transformational process. Today, children have more awareness owing to easy accessibility of resources regarding sex education, but it is important that the source of information is written for children, and is age appropriate.

HOW PARENTS CAN ADDRESS:

A) FREEWHEELING CONVERSATIONS: Teenage years are the wonder years wherein they explore more to know things that are 'hushed' to them. So, it is always better for a parent to address the issue openly, with maturity and yet, during a friendly free-wheeling fact-based conversation.

B) ASK AN EXPERT TO ADDRESS IT:

If the parent is uncomfortable, then approach a doctor, health professional or a teacher to address the issue with the child.

C) MOTHERS CAN ENGAGE SONS IN CHORES OF BUYING SANITARY NAPKINS:

Ideally, every mother, who has a son or daughter, should make the menstruation process and the requirement of a sanitary napkin, seem as natural 'as a headache' discussed in the house. If you have a son, you can sensitise your son by requesting him to purchase sanitary napkins for you. If you have a daughter, who is entering teenage years, take a few steps ahead by showing her sanitary napkins and talking about it. Gently draw her in the conversation and tell why periods happen and about the developmental changes in the body that will take place after she hits puberty.

D) FATHERS SHOULD ALSO PLAY A ROLE IN NORMALISING IT:

A father can also take part in period conversations by reading out books on the topic to daughters, so that the sense of it 'being only a girls' problem disappear. It is important that fathers don't joke, be sarcastic, laugh or mock, while talking about menstruation. The emotion here is only 'sensitivity'. Please understand this as a vital growth process mentally too, and a time to develop a very

body's need to transform. This will keep a child's mind free, when the periods start and eliminate shame, shock, trauma, anxiety or any such negative emotion.

'SHOW OF RESPECT' BEGINS AT HOME. THE CHILD OFTEN MIRRORS IN HIS ADULTHOOD WHAT HE GATHERED FROM THE ECOSYSTEM CREATED BY PARENTS. SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT HOW A HOME SHOULD ADDRESS ISSUES OF CONSENT, GOOD TOUCH/BAD TOUCH?

Children are watching your actions, your speech every second. The way the father speaks and treats a mother, and vice-versa, has a deep impact and role to play for a son/daughter who is observing the reactions. So, first keep a guard on yourself and make your home the perfect school of actions and right behaviour. If there are disagreements between parents, make the child understand that grown-ups have fights too, just like they do, and set an example by having a 'solution-centric approach'. Once, the kid understands sensitivity, and importance of empathy, you can start at as early as 6-7 years, talking about good touch, bad touch. It is very important to also address to boys and girls issues such as body shaming, teasing, activities that are legally incorrect, strangers, and most importantly, how and when to raise an alarm.

HOW CAN TEACHERS PLAY A ROLE IN ENGAGING STUDENTS IN MENSTRUATION CONVERSATIONS?

Sex Education in India should be on the top of the curriculum. We underestimate the knowledge that kids gain from various resources without any check. It is imperative that in schools, teachers talk about it scientifically and take out time to address all the queries that kids have in their minds. It is recommended that teachers talk to them openly with the right information rather than let them investigate on their own. Schools should invite volunteers to address the topic and answer teens' queries. If this is done sensitively, scientifically and correctly, we will be



strong, unbreakable bond between you and your daughter.

THE BEST AGE TO TALK ABOUT IT:

Initiate the conversation around 11 years when girls start seeing developmental changes and explain with a resource the

getting rid of the social stigma, shame and taboos associated with a normal process of the human body.

Join Times NIE Campaign 'Let's Talk: Period' and send us your views to toinie175@gmail.com

For full interview, log on to tolstudent.com

WHY CUTTING BACK ON PROCESSED FOODS IS NECESSARY

Processed food is not healthy for sure and as per a new study, it's bad for the environment too. You need to cut back on market-made sweets, fried foods, colas, etc. to save the planet! Here's how and why

THE STUDY

The findings of the study were published in the journal 'Current Nutrition Reports'. Australia and New Zealand households eat more discretionary and junk foods than recommended by dietary guidelines, contributing to food-related greenhouse gas emissions (GHGe) and other environmental impacts.

THE FINDINGS

University of South Australia (UniSA) dietician Sara Forbes, who led a



review examining 20 studies on the environmental impacts of food consumption in both countries, said the findings highlighted the need for more sustainable dietary choices. According

to a Federal Government report released in 2020, Australia emitted an estimated 510 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide, with food-related emissions accounting for 14.2 per cent of this total. The re-

port found that the average Australian produces the equivalent of 19.7kg of carbon dioxide each day via their food.

WHAT'S MORE?

Another report from 2017 found food waste comprised approximately six per cent of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions as the water, energy and pesticides used in food production and packaging ended up in landfills, where it released even more methane as it decomposed. So, do you still want to eat junk food?

HEALTH BYTES

The right time to get more vitamin D

Sunlight is the natural source of Vitamin D, a vitamin that is of great importance to our overall well-being. But not everyone is aware that sunlight exposure has a lot more value during winter. Ayurvedic doctor Dr Dixa Bhavsar shares that there are benefits of sunlight beyond Vitamin D. Let's take a look and know how it works



BEST TIME IN THE MORNING

Sitting in the sun right after sunrise to before 8 pm for 25-30 minutes can be of great value.

BEST TIME IN THE EVENING

Sunset exposure in the evening is helpful for the body.

UVA in sunlight

The UVA present in sunlight helps in improving blood flow, also lowers blood glucose levels and respiratory rate.

Great for mental well-being

The serotonin, melatonin, and dopamine present in sunlight

BENEFITS OF SUN EXPOSURE

Vitamin D is an extremely helpful hormone that is great for your immune system and also for the body's energy system

are great for your mental health and reduce risk of anxiety and depression.

Improves sleep Sunlight is said to improve your sleep quality and helps in making melatonin - the sleep hormone.

WORD OF CAUTION

Having listed the many benefits of sun exposure, it is important to remember that you must follow some precautions too. Do not overdo sun exposure and tweak your day in order to get more natural light.

GOOD FOOD

BEST WINTER VEGETABLES YOU SHOULD EAT REGULARLY

Seasonal food has always been an Indian speciality - we switch our choice in fruits, vegetables, sometimes - even grains with the onset of different seasons. The preference of using specific ingredients during certain climates is visible in our desserts as well. It's common to find local and traditional delicacies made of jaggery, instead of sugar during winter. Case in point - the Nolen Gur Rasgulla, a speciality made in Odisha and West Bengal between November to February. Celebrity chef, Sanjeev Kapoor, strongly advocates this need of eating seasonal produce. He says, "The beauty of our food is in our seasonal usage of fruits and vegetables. If you realise, Gajar Ka Halwa is made aplenty during winter as this is the season when beautiful red carrots hit the market or mango pickle is made during summer, thanks to its availability." So, load up your plate with these seasonal goodies and stay healthy



RADISH

Purple Mogri or Radish pods are not a common sight throughout the country. But you can spot them during the winter season in the local markets in northern India where women pick them up to make raitas, curries and stir fries. Rich in magnesium, calcium and copper, the vegetable is known to help heal digestive problems.

Region where you get it: North India



AVAREKALU OR HYACINTH BEANS

Avarekulu, also called Hyacinth beans in English, is a winter speciality in the south that is added to sambar, saagu, rotis, etc. Bengaluru is famed for its Avarekulu mela during the winter months, where you can find these beans in dosas, panipuri and jalebis. Thronged by crowds from all over the city, the food fest is a gourmand's delight.

Region where you get it: Karnataka

SWEET POTATO

A re-discovered favourite, sweet potatoes have created a space for itself in the modern Indian kitchen. With its diverse addition in burgers, chips and even chat, the root vegetable is filled with nutrients such as fibres and vitamins.

Region where you get it: Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh



AMLA OR GOOSEBERRY

The Indian gooseberry is a common winter fruit found throughout the country. High in Vitamin C, it is known to be immunity building and extremely beneficial for the skin and hair. There are multiple ways to eat amla - it is pickled, made into a fruit preserve called Murraba or even eaten by sprinkling salt over it.

Region where you get it: Though amla is found across the country, it is grown mostly in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu

(WITH INPUTS FROM IANS)