

Child Friendly News



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INDIA'S NEW BEST FRIEND

For the past few days, the newspapers have been full of photos of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Japan visit – we saw Modi taking part in a traditional Japanese tea ceremony, feed fish for good luck and even play a traditional Japanese Taiko drum. The Prime Minister has gone on to promise the Japanese that they would be very, very welcome in India and that he would make it very easy for Japanese companies to do business in India.

What came out of the visit?

- Japan has promised to give 35 billion dollars to India over the next 5 years for development projects
- Japan has lifted a ban on six Indian companies with whom it stopped doing business after India carried out nuclear technology tests in 1998. The devastation caused by the nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan during World War II has made the Japanese very sensitive to the use of nuclear bombs
- India and Japan will work together in areas like the road building, healthcare and clean energy (generation of power/electricity without harming the environment)

Why this love for Japan?

India and Japan go back a long way. It was a Japanese company – Suzuki Motors – that helped India launch the first Made-in-India car, the Maruti Suzuki, in 1983. Today our roads are full of Japanese cars made by Japanese companies like Honda, Toyota and Nissan in India. Our software companies like TCS and Infosys



Modi feeds fish and (below) takes part in a tea ceremony, both traditional rituals in Japan



develop software for Japanese customers. Japan has also given a lot of money to India for building bridges, roads and even the Delhi metro rail network.

Japan is a much admired country in India as Japan is a modern, fully developed country that has yet retained (kept back) its traditional values and culture. It may have invented the

A win after 24 years



On Tuesday, India beat England in the third One Day International (ODI), taking a 3-0 lead and winning the series as only one match remains to be played. Here are some records that were set on Tuesday.

- It is India's first series win in England in 24 years
- India has now won the 8 matches in a row in England (counting the wins at the Champions Trophy last year) – its longest winning streak in a country
- MS Dhoni is now India's most successful ODI captain with 91 wins. He has overtaken Mohammed Azharuddin's record of 90 wins.

bullet train (a super-fast passenger train) but the very engineers who built this futuristic train follow rules of behavior that are very traditional and old-fashioned. For instance, Japanese will bow to each other when they meet. How many of us greet others with a 'namaste' instead of a 'Hi!' or a handshake?

The two countries are also linked by Buddhism which originated (started) in India and spread to Japan. Buddhism is the main religion in Japan.

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ROBOTS CAN LEARN TOO

United States based Cornell University has unveiled (launched) Robo Brain, a computer project that stores information available on the Internet in a form that robots can learn from. And the project's role model? We humans ourselves.

What is it?

When you want to look up some information, what do most of us turn to? The Internet, of course. The Robo Brain is now making it possible for robots to do the same. It is a massive computer that is in the process of downloading from the Internet one billion images, 120,000 YouTube videos and 100 million how-to documents and appliance manuals. Using this massive amount of information, Robo Brain is learning to identify objects from real life. It is also teaching itself about human behavior. Take for instance, the example of a book. Using the

information from the internet along with data fed to it by Cornell professors, the Robo Brain will be able to understand that the book is an object to read and that it is read by opening the book and turning the pages. It

will also know that books are made from paper which may tear if handled roughly. It would then be able to extend that knowledge to understanding where books are kept (in bookshelves, inside rooms and libraries).

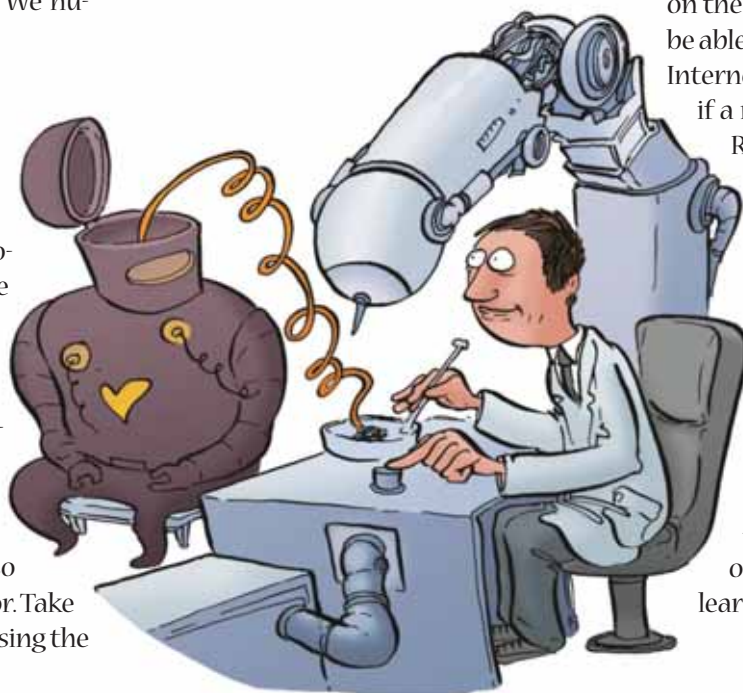
Teacher on call

The marvelous aspect of Robo Brain is that it can then transfer this knowledge to a robot that needs it. Just as we hunt for information on the internet using computers, robots will be able to connect to Robo Brain through the Internet and post questions. So, for instance,

if a robot encounters a tea cup, it can ask Robo Brain and find out that it is a kind of vessel meant for holding liquids, that it should be held by a handle so that the contents don't spill, and that it is usually made of breakable materials like porcelain.

Using the vast amount of information within Robo Brain, we could see robots become smarter very, very quickly.

You can visit the Robo Brain's website – [www.http://robobrain.me/#/](http://robobrain.me/#/) – to check out the kind of things Robo Brain is learning.



OLDEST METAL OBJECT

Look closely at the photo. It is the picture of an awl, a small pointed tool used for making holes especially in leather. What's so special about what is obviously an old tool? Well, it is the oldest metal object ever discovered in the world.

The copper awl was unearthed at an archaeological site in the West Asian country of Israel and is said to be around 6000 years old. The awl was discovered at a burial site of a woman who was about 40 years old when she died. She was buried with a belt around her waist made of 1,668 ostrich-egg shell beads. Several large stones covered the grave, which was dug inside a room-like structure, showing that the woman was probably important in her village.

Before this discovery, the earliest use of metal dated back to 4500 years ago.



When the scientists analysed the copper that the awl was made from, they found that it probably came from a place 1000 kilometres from the village where the woman was buried. This shows that people used to trade in metals thousands of years ago.

TIGER, TIGER BURNING OUT



Photo courtesy: Sumeet Moghe/Wikimedia Commons

There are just 3200 tigers left in the wild, according to a report put out by the World Wide Fund (WWF) for Nature. This is a huge drop compared to the 100,000 tigers that roamed Asia just 100 years ago. Tigers are now found in 13 Asian countries - India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand, and Vietnam. With around 1700 tigers, India has the largest population of these beautiful cats. Poaching or the killing of tigers for their skin and body parts for use in Chinese medicines is the biggest threat to tigers. Across Asia, between January 2000 and April 2014, parts of at least 1,590 tigers were seized (taken) from poachers - this means that around 2 tigers were

killed each week. If this isn't stopped, soon we may only be able to see tigers in zoos. How sad that would be!



Biological diversity is messy. It walks, it crawls, it swims, it swoops, it buzzes. But extinction is silent, and it has no voice other than our own.

—Paul Hawken



Features

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NATURE MATTERS

The last Passenger Pigeon

The extinction of a species is a process that is happening around us all the time. Daily, we hear of the drop in numbers of tigers, elephants and wild birds. But it is hard to pinpoint the exact date when a species becomes extinct. The passenger pigeon is the only exception to this rule. Exactly a hundred years ago, on the 1st of September, 1914, Martha, the last living passenger pigeon in the world, died at Cincinnati Zoo.

From 'zillions' to zero

The extinction of the passenger pigeon is an extraordinary story. Just a few hundred years ago, there were three to five billion of these birds in North America. They were probably then the most numerous bird in the world. They used to travel in flocks of thousands of birds – so big were these flocks that they were sometimes several hundred miles long. Two hundred years ago, John Audubon, a famous American bird painter described the passage of a flock in this manner: "The light of noonday was obscured as by an eclipse; the dung fell in spots, not unlike melting flakes of snow; and the continued buzz of wings had a tendency to lull my senses to repose." According to him the passage of this flock over a place took three full days, so many were the birds in number.

Why did they die out?

But just 100 years later, every last one of these birds was gone. Why? The answer to this question is another reason why this extinc-

Martha, the last passenger pigeon in the world



The dark shape in the sky is a flock of passenger pigeons

tion is so important. These birds were not killed by hunters, but by farmers. Until 500 years ago, there were hardly any people living in North America. As Europeans began crossing the Atlantic to settle down in the newly

discovered continent, the population grew. Slowly the extent of forests started to drop as they were cut down to create farms and pasture lands. Parts of the continent were once 95% covered with forests, now that percentage is less than 10%.

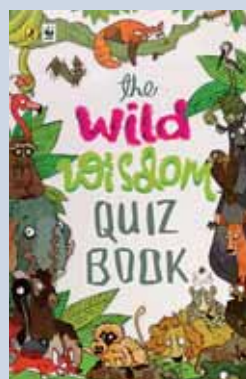
As the forests vanished, so did the food for the birds. With their huge flocks, passenger pigeons needed massive forests to provide them with the nuts that were their food. As their food supplies died out, so did the birds. Martha's story is a clear example of how we humans, as a dominant (most powerful) species, are capable of edging out other species. Can we learn not to be the bully in the playground? Finding an answer to this is really important to protect the thousands of species we share our world with.

THE BOOK NOOK

The Wild Wisdom Quiz Book

Which is the only snake to build a nest? Who is the head of an elephant family? What is the smallest Indian bird? Parliament is the group name for which bird?

Is your brain tickled by these questions? Are you hunting fervently for the answers? If you are a nature lover, fact hoarder or quiz fan, then this book is for you. The Wild Wisdom Quiz Book has been recently brought out by WWF India and contains questions that have been posed at the Wild Wis-

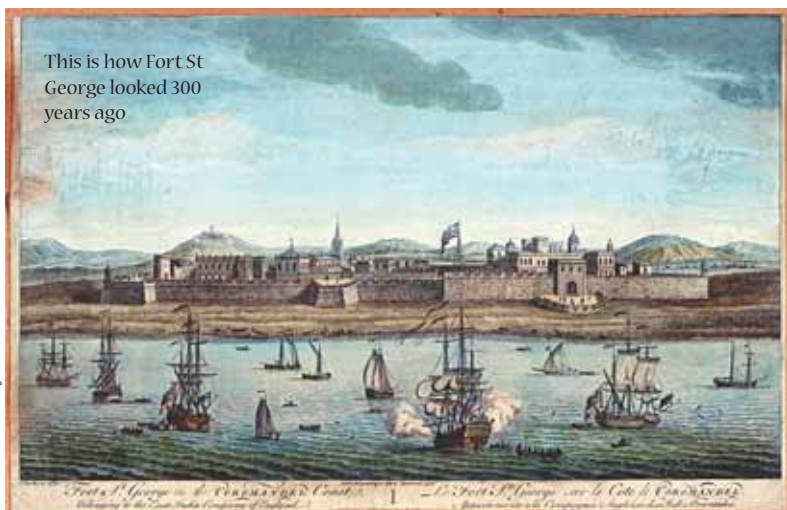


dom Quiz over the past five years. The Wild Wisdom Quiz is the only national level wildlife quiz in India.

The book is divided into chapters containing questions on birds, fish, amphibians, reptiles and mammals. It's a treasure chest of knowledge on India's wildlife.

Published by: Penguin India

Cost: Rs. 199



The city's story

On the 22nd of August, Chennai celebrated her 375th birthday. The city is one of our oldest modern cities, 50 years older than Kolkata and 35 years older than Mumbai.

It was founded by the British soon after they began arriving in India for trading. The Chennai region was then ruled by chieftains called the 'Nayaks' who were controlled by the Vijayanagar Empire of South India. On the 22nd of August 1639, Damerla Venkatadri Nayaka, one of the Nayaks, handed over a piece of land near the Bay of Bengal to an Englishman named Francis Day.

The British built a fort there called Fort St George which still stands. Around the fort, a British settlement gradually grew and over time came to include several nearby villages.

But the history of the city goes back much further to as far back as the 2nd century AD (almost 1800 years ago). It was ruled by Pallava and Chola kings before it came under the control of the Vijayanagar empire.

The Bible connection

The British weren't the first foreigners to establish a settlement in the Chennai region. The Portuguese arrived in 1522, and they built a port and named it São Tomé, after the Christian apostle Saint Thomas, who is believed to have preached in India between the years 52 and 70 AD.

According to the Bible, the holy book of the Christians, Saint Thomas was one of the 12 original apostles (followers) of Jesus Christ. He is believed to have arrived in Kerala in the year 52 AD and eventually came



Chennai is dotted with things from the past. The famous Marundeeswarar Temple is more than 1300 years old. Parts of it were built by the Chola kings

The Chen

At 375 years of age, the city of Chennai is a grand old lady. And last week, she celebrated this landmark birthday with a week of celebrations. Let's find out more about the city of Chennai, the gateway to South India and one of India's historically important cities.

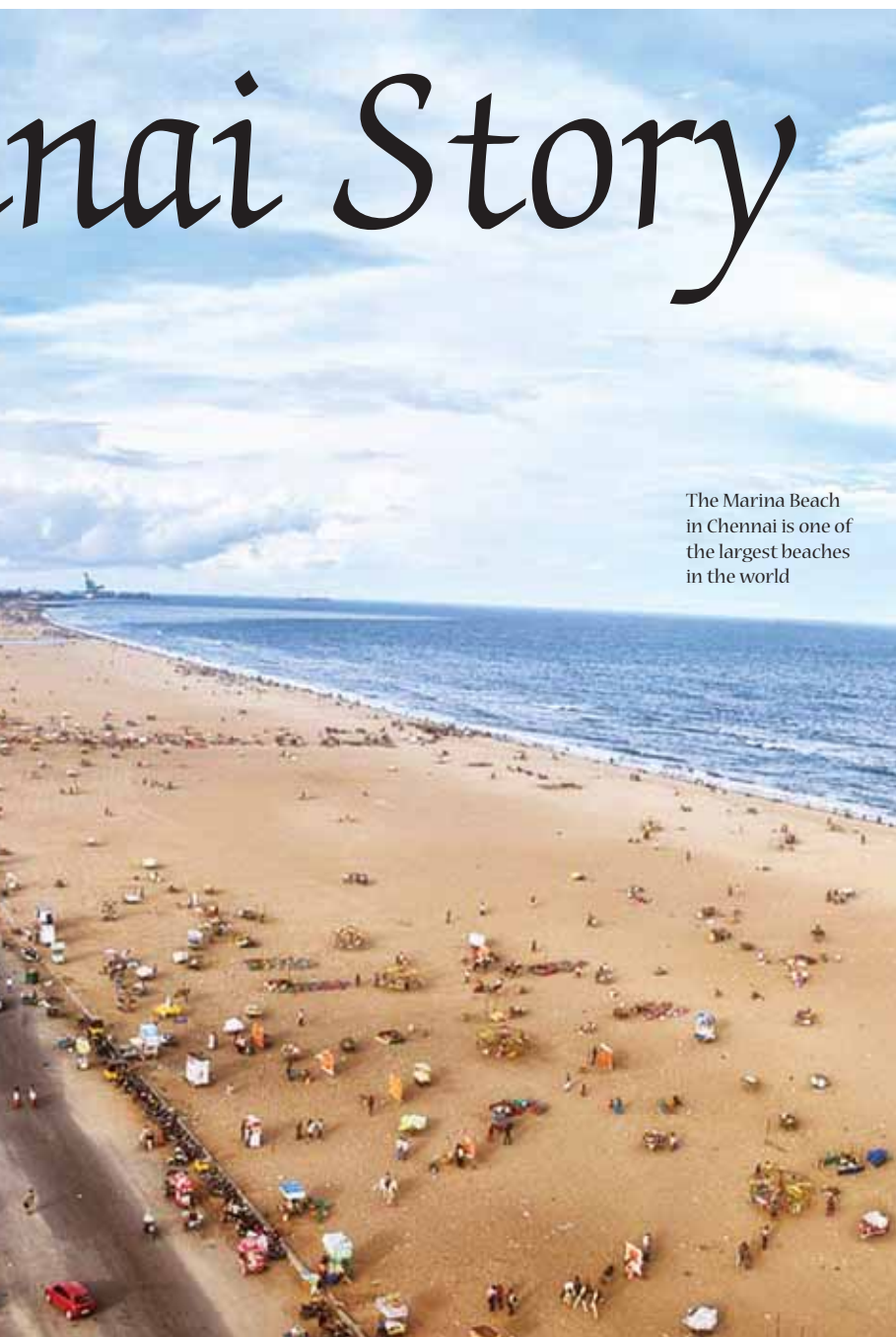


The Portuguese built a tomb over the spot where St. Thomas is said to have been buried. Later the British built this beautiful church – also called Santhome Basilica – on the same spot after pulling down the tomb.

to Chennai. Today a church on a small hill in Chennai called St. Thomas Mount stands on the spot where St. Thomas is said to have died.

British Bastion

Through the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, as the British became more and more powerful in India, Chennai continued to grow. By the time India came under the control of the British Queen Victoria in 1857, it was one of the four most important cities of India – a group that also included Kolkata, Mumbai and Delhi. Some of India's oldest companies such as EID Parry, Binny & Co and Spencers (some of which operate even today)



The Marina Beach in Chennai is one of the largest beaches in the world

Chennai Story

were founded by Englishmen in Chennai. Post-independence, the city has been the capital of Tamil Nadu state and has become one of India's largest cities. It is home to 4.7 million people, making it the 31st largest city in the world.



The Spencer & Co building is India's oldest mall, dating back to British times. The old building in the picture was burnt in a fire in 1983 and a modern mall stands in its place.

NAME CHANGE

Chennai was originally called Madras, which is said to have come from the word Madraspatnam, which came from the name of the area given to the British in 1639. In 1995 as part of a move to make city names more Indian, Madras was renamed Chennai by the government of Tamil Nadu.

SONS (AND DAUGHTERS) OF THE SOIL

Here are photos of some famous people who were born and/or lived in Chennai. Can you identify them? Answers below in reverse.



- Answers
1. R.K. Narayan, author
2. Indra Nooyi, CEO of Pepsi Co
3. C V Raman, scientist
4. Vijay Aruntraj, tennis player

5 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT CHENNAI

Robert Clive, one of the people who founded the British Empire in India, was married in a church inside Fort St. George.

»



« Chennai was the only Indian city to be attacked during the World Wars of the 20th century. It was bombed by a German ship, Emden, in 1917 during

World War I (1914-1918), though the incident did not cause much damage to the city. Since then, the word Emden has found a place in the Tamil language. In Tamil, the word means someone who is determined and bound to create trouble.

Elihu Yale, after whom the famous Yale University in the United States is named, made his fortune when he was Governor of Madras during the British rule. It was some of this fortune that he contributed towards the university.

»



« The city of Madras also lends its name to a kind of cloth or fabric called Madras cotton checks that has a typical pattern of checks as seen in the picture.

Madras has a bird named after it. The scientific name of the Large Pied Wagtail is *Motacilla Madraspatensis*.

»





We admire elephants in part because they demonstrate what we consider the finest human traits: empathy, self-awareness, and social intelligence. But the way we treat them puts on display the very worst of human behavior.

—Graydon Carter

WORLD

Are African elephants facing extinction?

Between 2010 and 2012, more than 100,000 African elephants were killed by poachers. This huge drop in numbers has led experts to think that the African elephant is facing an extinction threat. Extinction happens when an entire species dies out.

Who is saying this?

The count of killed elephants was carried out by a group of scientists from the United States and was published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* earlier this month. The report said that in the year 2011 alone, one out of every 12 African elephants was killed by a poacher. The greatest loss was in central Africa which has lost more than half its elephant population.

Poachers are bad people who kill wild animals mainly for their skin and body parts. In the case of elephants, poachers are after ivory, the material that elephant tusks are made of. The greatest demand for ivory comes from China.

Numbers down

There are still around 472,000 to 690,000 elephants in Africa according to a report published in 2007 by a conservation organization



called IUCN. But compare that to the 1.3 million elephants that roamed the continent in 1979.

Why are elephants important?

Elephants have an important role in any ecosystem (habitat) that they are a part of. They open up grasslands and pathways in



the forest. The paths that they stamp out create access roads to waterholes for smaller creatures. They are also called the "mega-gardeners of the forest" as they help in seed dispersal. In other words, the African wild will change for the worse if elephant numbers keep dropping and the species dies out.

INDIA

Supreme Court bats for wildlife

The Supreme Court of India has come to the rescue of wildlife in India. The court has stopped recent decisions of the National Wildlife Board, which would have threatened wildlife in different parts of the country, from being implemented.

Recently the Narendra Modi government announced a new set of members for the National Wildlife Board. Instead of the 15 independent members (people who are not working for the government in any way but are instead wildlife/environment experts),

that the Board should have, the government chose to appoint just 3 independent members. The new Board held meetings on August 12 and 13 during which it cleared many projects including:

- A road passing near Flamingo City in Gujarat which is the only nesting area for flamingos in India

- A dam over the river Teesta in Sikkim for generating electricity

- A bridge over the Chambal river in Central India where the endangered gharial crocodile lives

Many of these projects were not agreed to by the previous Wildlife Board due to the damage and disturbance they would cause to wildlife. Now the Supreme Court has said that unless it finally decides on the matter, the decisions of the new Board should not be put into action. Let's hope that the Court can help create a strong National Wildlife Board that can protect the interests of wildlife.



The Lesser Flamingo

WORLD

Meet the real Batman

A black-clad figure dressed like comic super hero Batman can be found riding the streets of Chiba prefecture in Japan. A prefecture is similar to a district and Chiba has lent its name to this masked figure that goes by the name of Chibatman.

If Batman had his Batmobile, Chibatman has his Chibatpod, a three wheeled motorcycle painted all black. Chibatman has been prowling the streets of Chiba for about three years now but his identity remains a mystery. If the original Batman produced fear and awe, Chibatman only brings smiles to the faces of the people of Chiba – and that seems to be his goal.





"There is a syndrome in sports called paralysis by analysis. The ideal attitude is to be physically loose and mentally tight."

—Tennis legend Arthur Ashe on preparing for a match



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INDIA

India's oldest university re-opens

800 years after it shut down, the Nalanda University is once again open for students. The University re-opened on Monday with a small number of students studying subjects like ecology and the environment. Set up around 1500 years ago, Nalanda was a great centre of learning that was at its peak during the rule of the Gupta kings in North India. The university was set in a huge campus dotted with buildings, gardens and lotus ponds. It attracted thousands of students, some of whom came from as far away as Korea, Japan, China, Tibet, Indonesia, Persia and Turkey. The ancient university was destroyed by invaders around 800 years ago. The university and its famous library (said to be one of the largest in the world at that time) were wrecked.

A few years ago, the Government of India came up with a plan to re-open Nalanda University. With the first classes taking place on Monday, that plan has borne fruit (succeeded). The University will only admit a small number of students who are studying or re-searching specialized subjects.



Photo courtesy: Wikimedia Commons

SPORTS

Sindhu wins bronze at World Championships



It's a bronze medal again for P.V. Sindhu who won the prize for the second year in a row at the World Badminton Championships held in Denmark. Sindhu, who was looking to make it to the final, disappointingly lost to Spain's Carolina Marin in the semi-finals. However, the Indian player has had a dream run in the Championships with victories over top players like Korean Yeon Ju Bae and Chinese player Shixian Wang in previous rounds. Sindhu is the only Indian player to win an individual medal at the World Championships twice. Prakash Padukone won a bronze in 1983 while

Jwala Gutta and Ashwini Ponappa won bronze in women's doubles in 2011. Had Sindhu won the Marin match and made the final, she would have brought home a silver medal at the very least. India's other star player Saina Nehwal lost in initial rounds (stages) at the event.

SPORTS

U S Open begins in New York

The fourth and last Grand Slam tennis event – the US Open – is now underway at New York in the United States. Players have had to deal with extreme heat and torrential rain in the first week. At the time this paper went to print on Wednesday, giants in the men's game – Roger Federer, Andy Murray and Novak Djokovic had all made it to the quarter finals.

5 things you didn't know about the US Open

- The US Open was the first of the four Grand Slams to introduce equal money for male and female winners
- It is also the only Grand Slam where both the Men's and Women's Champions go home with exactly the same kind of trophy
- It is played at Flushing Meadows in New York and is one of the noisiest tennis tournaments thanks to a nearby airport
- It is also the tournament with the biggest prize money – last year's (singles) Champions won 2.8 million dollars.
- The Billie Jean King National Tennis Center at Flushing Meadows is the biggest tennis stadium in the world.





Crack the Chennai code

Here are photos of Chennai landmarks. How many can you identify?



- Answers
1. Vivekananda House, a building on the Marina Beach where Swami Vivekananda once stayed
 2. Chennai's Central Railway Station is located in a beautiful British-era building
 3. The Adayar banyan tree, which is 450 years old, is one of the oldest Banyan trees in the world
 4. St. Thomas Mount, where St. Thomas, the follower of Jesus Christ, was killed

UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS

Re-arrange the alphabets to find the word

Hint: All clues are linked to Chennai

1. SAADMR
2. AIAMNR CBEAH
3. LMTAI
4. EEMPLPT

- Answers
1. Madras
 2. Marina Beach
 3. Tamil
 4. Temple

SUDOKU TIME

5	2		1		
	6				
	4	2	3		
		5	2	6	
				4	
		6		2	1

Try your hand at this Sudoku. Remember that numbers 1 to 6 can appear only once in each of the six rectangles. They can also appear only once in each row and column of the overall square.

6					
4					
6	2	5			
3	2	4			
6					
2	5	1			

Answer

FIND THE HIDDEN PICTURES



Top Reads for Kids and Young Adults

1. Percy Jackson and the Greek Gods by Rick Riordan
2. National Geographic Kids Almanac: 2015
3. The Chocolate Box Girls: Sweet Honey by Cathy Cassidy
4. Alien Escape: Spacemice: Book 1 by Brandon Mull
5. George and the Unbreakable Code by Stephen and Lucy Hawking
6. The Hunt for the Golden Book by Geronimo Stilton
7. The Art of Hunting by Allen Campbell
8. Five Kingdoms: Sky Raiders by Brandon Mull
9. Grandfather Gandhi by Arun Gandhi and Bethany Hegedus
10. Dragon Keeper: Dragon Moon (Book 3) by Carole Wilkinson



To know more about these books and to buy them, check out

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Child Friendly News or CFN is an age appropriate newspaper for children in the age group 7-13. The newspaper comes out every fortnight. Every issue is written using language that young readers can understand on their own interspersed with picture and imagery. Quick explanations of difficult words and terms and boxed elements that explain concepts accompany every article — this is to help build vocabulary as well as context understanding. Special reports take up one topic in depth while

regular columns on everyday technology concepts keep children up-to-date with the world around them. A subscription costs Rs. 650 for the year.

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