ARBiT it happens here...

World Prematurity Day

World Prematurity Day calls attention to the special issues facing infants born prematurely, celebrates the development and growth of older babies and children who were born prematurely, and is a great day to support members of your community who work with new-borns or premature infants, or are parents adjusting with a prematurely born infant.A full-term pregnancy lasts between 37 and 42 weeks, and "prematurity" describes when a baby is born earlier than 37 weeks (gestational time). Prematurely born infants face many health issues.

राष्ट्रदूत
THURSDAY
17 November 2022
A-B

#TRADITION

'TIS the Season of Cake Mixings

Come November and there are a host of cake mixing ceremonies taking place in the city's hotels and cafes. This year, a new trend of non-alcoholic cake mixings also surfaced to include children in the process.

Cake Mixing Ceremony at Crowne Plaza.

Tusharika Singh
Freelancer writer and city blogger

With the dazzling lights and sparkling decorations all over, Jaipur's Diwali has always been much talked about. However, the Pink City has been witnessing a new celebratory trend in the last few years. Even before the Diwali festivities come to an end, it is time to ring in the Christmas season. And nothing says Christmas better than a slice of the rich and delicious Christmas cake. Come November and there are a host of cake mixing ceremonies taking place in the city's hotels and cafes.

What's it all about?

Cake mixing is an age-old tradition where large quantities of dry fruits, nuts, grains and spices are combined together to form a mixture. This mixture is then soaked in alcoholic blends for some days to let them soak all the flavours and aroma. Lastly, it is divided into smaller batches which go into the cake batter, from which the Christmas plum cakes are finally baked.

A 15 feet long table for mixing

This year, the cake mixing kicked off with Hotel Holiday Inn's cake mixing ceremony. Adorned in red and white décor themed Christmas, the ambience was set at the hotel lobby for the annual Cake Mixing Ceremony.

Team of Jaipur Marriott at the Cake Mixing Ceremony at the poolside of the hotel.

The guests donned aprons, gloves, and Santa caps, and gathered around the 15 feet long table to prepare the fruit mixture for the Christmas cake. A wide array of fruits, like raisins, glazed red cherries, orange peel, tutti frutti, black currants, dates, figs, dried apricots, and prunes, were added in with nuts and flavourful spices. The mixing reached a spirited level as the guests poured the choicest of spirits into the fruit mixture. The kitchen staff of the Hotel then topped it up with golden syrup, molasses, honey, and vanilla essence.

The Executive Chef of the hotel, Raj Kumar said that Cake Mixing Ceremony is a ritual which hails from Europe, wherein the mixture is emptied into large containers and stored for days before Christmas with occasional stirring in between.

Non-alcoholic cake mixings

A new trend that was observed in cake mixings this year was that of non-alcoholic cake mixings. Due to the use of alcohol in cake mixings, children are unable to partake in this festive activity. City's popular food consultants, Cauldron Sisters, organized a non-alcoholic cake-mixing ceremony for the children in the Bagadia Bhavan situated cafe Quyu's Taproom. "I do a non-alcoholic cake mixing for my 9 year old son every year but this time I thought of involving other children also in this activity. The children came with their mothers and loved mixing dried fruits and berries with juices", says Ratika Bhargava of Cauldron Sisters.

Hotel Clarks Amer's popular 24x7 cafe, Zolocrust also organized a non-alcoholic cake mixing this year keeping in mind the hotel's ethos of sustainability and healthy living.

Larger than life culinary spread

Adding a gastronomic edge to their cake mixing, Hotel Crowne Plaza blew away the attendees with their larger than life culinary spread. From a host of salads to high tea snacks like rolls, puffas and tartines, the hotel also served delights like chicken satay and paneer tikka. Wholesome meals like kadhi pakoda, dal makhani and chulhe ka shikaar with steamed rice were served in kulhads. Not to forget, desserts like Black forest roulade, Coconut lamingtons, Rose and almond choux buns, Classic chocolate mini éclairs, you name it and they had it!

Cocktails and Canapés

The string of cake mixings concluded with a lively poolside ceremony replete with cocktails, canapés and live music at Hotel Jaipur Marriott. On the occasion, General Manager of the hotel, Rahul Maini said that over the years, cake mixing has become something of a ritual and is an occasion one looks forward to. The ceremony also had a unique set-up with juices and cherries for children.

Guests participate in the Cake Mixing Ceremony at Holiday Inn.

There is an urgent need for parents to spend more time with children, to understand their world, to upgrade their own knowledge and understanding of the new world is critical if they want to retain connection with their children. Simply paying bills is not sufficient. Remember that once kids get disconnected from you, to get them back is progressively more difficult. If they don't see you as role models, they will find others that you will not even know about, and those others will teach them things that would make your hair go white overnight if you knew what that was. Don't let it come to that.

Mirza Yawar Baig
Naturalist and wildlife conservationist

The End Of The World Is Not Here... (...2)

We live in a world where we seem to be surrounded by bad news. That leads to us feeling stressed, depressed, threatened, and hopeless about the future. Many people seem to feel that we are living at the end of times, and in a world and society that is terrible to live in. If you feel this way, believe me, you are not alone. However, the problem with this feeling is that firstly it is not true. Secondly, if you feel this way, then it debilitates you and takes away your initiative to do anything. It drains your energy, sabotages your ambition, and increases your anxiety to potentially dangerous levels.

What should we do? Be grateful. Gratitude is energizing, joyful, encouraging, and very powerful. Ingratitude is the opposite on all these counts. The question is, what should we be grateful for? Let me help you with facts.

When I was growing up from 1950's to 1980's, we didn't have a refrigerator, gas, or electric stove. Food was cooked on firewood or coal in a smoky kitchen or outdoors. We routinely had no electricity for many hours a day and so no lights or fans. We had no central heating or air conditioning, and one car. Nobody had more because even one was a rarity. No TV. What was on your lap was not a computer. Phones were not smart, people were.

We wrote letters by hand, licked the stamp, stuck it on the envelope, posted it and counted the days until the postman brought us a reply. We had malaria, cholera and typhoid, polio, and tuberculosis. Later we got chikungunya, and dengue. We always had the flu and when the doctors didn't know what we had, they called it, 'viral fever'. Today, malaria and poliomyelitis have been eradicated. The others remain. I can add to this list, but instead let us be grateful that we can talk about those days and smile.

Today with air-conditioning, antibiotics, painkillers, glasses and LASIX surgery for sight correction, cataract and bypass surgery, medical diagnostic equipment and advanced pathology, sneakers, thermal underwear, and jackets, eating out, non-seasonal fruits, treadmills, central heating, indoor flushing toilets, hot and cold water on tap, we, ordinary people, are better off and more comfortable than the wealthiest kings and queens of the past. Add to this that today our children routinely go to school, are literate and many go on to higher education.

#LIFE

An Attitude of Gratitude

In Medieval Europe the majority of people couldn't write their names and that included most kings and queens. We live in countries where the only thing limiting your material growth, learning and career advancement is yourself. Anyone willing to make the effort can get to the top. See who are the people heading major corporations whose turnover is more than the GDP of many countries. Not a single one is a hereditary monarch or noble. There was a time, not too long ago where if you were not born into the right family, your fate was sealed. Today, your present situation doesn't decide if you will succeed or fail. It only defines where you need to start. If you have ambition, determination, seek feedback, are willing to learn, sleep less and work hard, nothing but death can stop you.

Despite all this, we enjoyed life enormously and have wonderful memories, not because we had stuff, but because we had attitude. An attitude of gratitude. That was inculcated into us from the earliest and that is what is most necessary in the way we raise children today.

An attitude of gratitude.

Teach them to value people and use stuff. Not the other way around. Thankfulness is the open secret of happiness. So, while we look at all that is 'wrong' with society, let's reflect on what is right. There is far more that's right than what's wrong.

The 'Global Village'

Let me continue. Today our major preoccupation is Covid, right? Let us put that also in perspective. The Justinian Plague which started in 541 CE is estimated to have killed 50 million people-about half the world's population at that time-as it spread across Asia, North Africa, Arabia, and Europe. While the exact origins of the plague remain unclear, it is estimated that up to 300,000 people died in Constantinople in the first year of the outbreak. There were approximately 5,000 deaths in the city every day at the height of the pandemic, even reaching highs of 10,000 on some days. The Justinian plague had a mortality rate of between 68-78%. Death would come between 2 - 5 days after infection. The plague resurfaced roughly every 10 years from 1348 to 1665-40 outbreaks in just over 300 years. Plague doesn't exist today. Another major killer was Smallpox with a mortality rate of 30%. Those who survived lived with permanent scars on the face. DePaul Professor Thomas Mockaitis writes, "There hasn't been a kill off in human history to match what happened in the Americas where 90 to 95% of the indigenous population was wiped out over a century. Mexico went from 11 million people pre-conquest to one million."

One of those alleged to have used Smallpox as a germ or biological warfare weapon against the Native Americans, right here in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, is Field Marshal Lord Jeffery Amherst, 1st Baron Amherst who allegedly ordered that blankets infected with the discharge of Smallpox sores should be sold to Native Americans. This was done and the result in a population which had no resistance to the disease was predictable. It wiped them out. Smallpox was eradicated in 1981. Now, compare the fatality rate of the plague and Smallpox to Covid 19 which never exceeded 1.5% at its peak. What do you want to say about Covid now? The fact is that if we look at change over time, the world today is healthier, richer, and better educated than in the past.

This doesn't mean that there are no problems. There are problems, many of them new ones. To solve them we must collaborate and work together across boundaries of culture, race, religion, and nationality. We must collaborate and share our blessings for the greater good of everyone. We like to talk about the 'Global Village', but don't usually remember that one of the results of being a village is that what happens to one, will affect another. We are in this together, in the same boat, to sink or swim as we wish.

Remember that everything comes at a price. Be it automation, augmented reality, or Metaverse, it is creating a world that is increasingly further away from reality, human contact, and relationships. Social media is the tool to enhance the illusion of action, popularity, and influence and take away the real power from action, so that the manipulators can have a free hand once the forwarder and tweeter have forwarded and tweeted and gone back to sleep.

Child with Smallpox.

The illusion of action takes away edge from the need to act and no result ensues. After all, which tweet put bread on the table or relieved anyone from oppression? People believe in conspiracy theories today, more than in scientific research and trust is the most devastating casualty. The result of spreading distrust is not that people distrust one source, they distrust everyone. That is what we are seeing today. Nobody is trusted. Neither government, nor clergy, nor scientists, nor academics. Not even parents and community elders. That makes people even more vulnerable to manipulation and is the reason why we see a new theory of world control every week, each more outlandish than its predecessor but hard facts about climate change and global warming are scoffed at and denied, even by our so-called global leaders.

We are social beings with a strong affiliation drive and need company, affirmation, and friendship. No matter how convenient the gadget or technology, if there is no human contact, it leads to loneliness, depression, and increasingly serious mental illnesses. In addition, not having to deal with people daily will take away our skills to do so. This will have a seriously negative impact on team working, marriage, raising children, influencing, politics, and just plain human relations. We started seeing signs of this from the 80's with computer programmers which gave a programmer the ability to write code and earn a very good living without meeting people face to face daily, like say for example, someone in a machine shop would be forced to do. The poorly developed social skills of the programmer didn't matter, until he got promoted to lead a team, in which he failed miserably.

Living in a Revolution

Worse happened to him in his personal life, marriage, raising children and so on. Paradoxically someone from the hotel industry did very well as a team leader of a software development team, though he had only sketchy knowledge about software development and couldn't write a single line of code. We are human and we need humans. That's why John D. Rockefeller is reported to have said, "I will pay more for the ability to get along with people than I will pay for any other ability." I want to say to you that AI will never replace the human except in a mechanical, transactional way, nor take away our psychological need for human contact.

Augmented Reality.

> We are living in a revolution. What we choose to do or not to do will leave a legacy that will be uniquely ours. Let us choose for the future of generations

Let me pause and remind you that I am not anti-AI. That would be like being anti-cholesterol. It is there. It is nice. It is what makes Biryani worth dying for. What we need to do is to learn how to deal with it so that we can mitigate and minimize its negative effects. AI is hugely beneficial as it will automate all kinds of routine work and enable massive intuitive data mining and manipulation. But it will also influence how we think and what we value in ourselves and others. And that will affect how we deal with one another. We can neither reject nor run away from AI. We don't need to, and we mustn't. We must however prepare for the changes it will create which will have little to do with the technology but everything to do with our humanness.

I remind myself and you that the world ahead is more and more complex and complicated, and our life experience is of little value to our children unless we can conceptualize it into lessons that they can apply. Many children have said to me, 'Our parents tell us stories about how they had no electricity in their homes and studied under a streetlamp and many such things. What am I supposed to do with these stories? They don't apply to me. But if I say that, it will hurt them.' What's the answer to that? I know the answer. But do you know it? There is an urgent need for parents to spend more time with children, to understand their world, to upgrade their own knowledge and understanding of the new world is critical if they want to retain connection with their children. Simply paying bills is not sufficient. Remember that once kids get disconnected from you, to get them back is progressively more difficult. If they don't see you as role models, they will find others that you will not even know about, and those others will teach them things that would make your hair go white overnight if you knew what that was. Don't let it come to that.

We are living in a revolution. What we choose to do or not to do will leave a legacy that will be uniquely ours. Let us choose for the future of generations, not our own present, so that it will be a legacy of honour.

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Advanced Medical Care.

Parents need to spend more time with children.

#WILDLIFE

Asian Animals

"Trophic downgrading is usually worst near humans because hunters target larger species. But in the case of tigers, elephants, wild boars, and clouded leopards, their Asian populations are higher nearby humans," says Amir.

Some of Asia's largest animals are defying 12,000 years of extinction trends by thriving alongside humans, a study finds. Others are less fortunate.

Researchers scoured paleontological records to compare the historic distribution of Asia's 14 largest species with their populations in present-day tropical forests.

Four species-tigers, Asian elephants, wild boars, and clouded leopards-showed increased populations in areas with human infrastructure, says PhD candidate Zachary Amir, from the University of Queensland's School of Biological Sciences and the Ecological Cascades Lab.

"These results show that, under the right conditions, some large animals can live nearby humans and avoid extinction," Amir says.

"These results challenge the narrative within some conservation circles that humans and megafauna are incompatible. Globally there is a trend towards 'trophic downgrading,' a term referring to the disproportionate loss of the world's largest animals.

"Trophic downgrading is usually worst near humans because hunters target larger species. But in the case of tigers, elephants, wild boars, and clouded leopards, their Asian populations are higher nearby humans," says Amir.

"This may be the outcome of tougher anti-poaching efforts in the national parks that are closer to human settlements and are more frequently visited by tourists."

The study in Science Advances also finds that deforestation still affects species, and clouded leopard numbers in particular have experienced a strong decline in those areas.

But, Amir says the research shows that if the large animal species were not hunted, they could live in relatively small habitats and near humans.

"Previously, there have only been a few examples of large Asian species thriving in small habitats near humans, notably in Mumbai, India where leopards in an urban park prey on stray dogs," Amir says. "Thankfully, we found that a wider range of animals can coexist with humans."

At one of their study sites in Singapore, where poaching has been eliminated and there are considerable forest restoration efforts, two large animal species are thriving again.

"Singapore has actually experienced the natural re-wilding of sambar deer and wild boars, which are now frequently observed in an urban forest, the Bukit Timah Nature Reserve," says Amir.

"If we replicate those protection efforts in larger forests and other counties, we may see positive impacts right around the world. But before this can happen, humans need to get our act together and limit poaching."

While there are some positive results, research fellow and study co-author Matthew Luskin says the study also notes strong declines in tapirs, Sumatran rhinoceros, sun bears, guar, and other large animals.

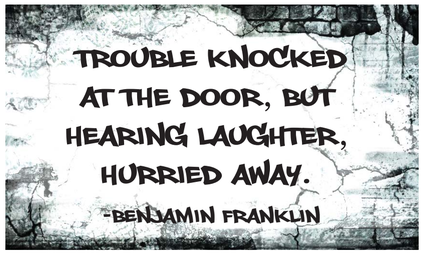
"The key innovation of this work was to systematically investigate the population trends of many different wildlife species across the region," says Luskin. "Then we tested if all species showed consistent trends and if similar parks retained similar species.

"Remarkably, we found no two forests currently possess the same group of wildlife compared to thousands of years ago."

Luskin says the research offered an opportunity to shape the future of nature.

"These results provide hope for wildlife in forests previously considered too far degraded or too close to cities," he says. "Now we're exploring new conservation strategies for these surprising places."

THE WALL



BABY BLUES

By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman