A R B I I it happens here.

#TRAVEL

Most Offbeat Places in South India

In case you have already explored most of India and are in search for that secret gem in the Southern part of India, then here are a list of offbeat places in South India.



ave you been to South India yet? If yes, you must have ticked off all the tourist hotspots, and must be thinking what more this part of the country has to offer. So here is the list of most offbeat places in South India that you need to bookmark, and visit during your next trip.

Skandagiri Hills

Known for being a paradise for trekkers, it's an ancient moun tain fortress located around 3 km from Chikkballapur. It can be best explored in a day trip from Bengaluru. As you reach the place, embark on a 2-hour easy trek up a well-marked route on the 1350 m high peak. And as you reach the top, you are rewarded with some gorgeous views around, and not to forget, some fresh air.

ArakuVallev

If you have been seeking a reaxed vacation for a long time, Araku Vallev should be the ideal place where you get to romance the beauty of Eastern Ghats. Undoubtedly an absolute stunner, this place sees less crowds, and is vet to become touristy. If possible, plan your visit to this place during



not regret it

Also referred to as the Niagara Fall of India at times, this place is a true beauty! The very view of the water falling on the rocks, which seems like emanating smoke from the top of the rock due to the force of water, is just unbelievable. You can spend hours of your precious time here, and let time slip by, as you appreciate the beauty around.

Ponmudi Hills

The serene ambience of this place will instantly soothe your senses and keep you hooked for some time. This place boasts of a scenic location that manages to catch the attention of every kind of traveller. Since it's offbeat and one of the less-explored hill destinations in South India. you can expect less crowd and get all the space that you want. When here, spend time admiring the gushing water streams, exploring beautiful hilltop spots, and much more.

Athirapally Falls

Do you remember watching the breathtaking waterfall in the blockbuster movie Bahubali? If ves, vou should visit the Athira-



winters, when it turns more pleasant and beautiful than you can imagine

Belum Caves

It's the longest cave system in India that is open to tourists. Belum caves are also the second largest in the Indian subcontinent. which has been formed in black limestone. and features spacious chambers, long passages, and freshwater galleries. There are some spots where the caves go as deep as 46 m, and there are around 16 different pathways, including the main entrance.

Dhanushkodi, Tamil Nadu

Not frequented by a lot of visitors, you are sure that Dhanushkodi will give you all the serene ambience and space that you need. Make sure you hit the roads, as the best way to explore this beautiful offbeat destination is via road. Mark the Dhanushkodi Beach in your itinerary, and you will

height of around 80 ft, ther breaking into numerous parallel streams, it's a sight to behold. It's the largest waterfall in South India, and the flow of water during the monsoon season is at its neak. Make sure you bring a set of extra clothes or a raincoat, as you might get drenched due to the splashing waterfalls. Gandikota

pally waterfalls, where the said

scene was shot. Flowing from a

The beauty of Gandikota is just magical! In other words, verv few sights in India car match the grandeur of this place. You can hike all the way up to the top to the gorge to witness the spectacular beauty of the area. It's India's own Grand Canvon that is vast in size, and features landscapes that are way more dramatic than you can imagine. Over the years, it managed to gain momentum in the tourism circuit, and deserves a visit at least once.



Talk Journalism, an event which was recently held at Clark's Amer Hotel did not have jostling crowds like JLF. It did not have people vying for attention from their favourite celebrity or attending the sessions for merely showing off their presence on the social media. Yet it was way more interesting and engaging. It was more of a melting pot of ideas, where journalists and journalism students met and shared their stories and lives. It was a forum where journalists talked about themselves and their craft more than the world events or lives of other people.



Shailaza Singh Published author, poet and a YouTuber



ho are really journalists? Are they people who merely nound celebrities or are they people who report events, happenings and keep an eve on what is going on in

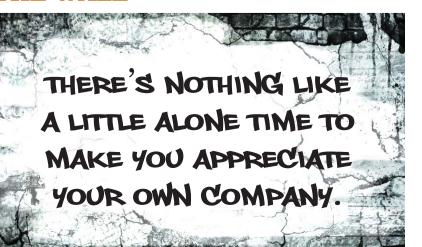
the world? Every

time that I have attended the Jaipur Literature Festival or many other such events as a journalist, I have felt like an intruder or a 'hounder' of celebrities and other speakers. The moment one tries to speak to a guest at the festival or a known person, a zealous PR person steps up from nowhere and almost chases the person away. But since one has a deadline to meet and an article or a story to deliver, it becomes a saga of constant cajoling and pleading to get that interview, that teen ween byte, that small little quote which when given feels like a big favour from a big celebrity in Jaipur, who quite paradoxically is mostly seen wandering alone and unnoticed in cities like Mumbai or Delhi or their



Students discussing journalism and its various aspects.

THE WALL





Asaduddin Owaisi, CP Joshi, communist leader D Raja with Rajdeep Sardesai at a session in Talk Journalism

Thank God! There is Talk Journalism

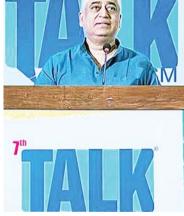
#PONDER

Men in Black

So, this time when one walked down the lane that led to the Clark's Amer Hotel for 'Talk Journalism', a recently held event, I was all set to deal with the zealous PRs again. It was common knowledge that celebrities like Sachin Pilot, Barkha Dutt. Raideep Sardesai. Sagarika Ghose would be attending the event. However, I saw no 'men or women in black' around the venue. 'Maybe they were invisible somewhere and will only appear when I approach a celebrity,' I thought. I made a mental note to keep a watch out for them as I made my way to the hall where the sessions were underway.

With Their Own Tribe

Unlike the multiple venues of JLE Talk Journalism had only two venues- a hall on the ground floor and another one in the basement. Life was quite easy as one did not have to rush from one venue to the next or deal with the madding crowd on the way. Whether it was about Sachin Pilot discussing his destiny and politics with Rahul Shrivastava, national affairs editor, India Today TV or various workshops about fact checking or distinguishing real news from fake news. the halls were filled with students and spectators who were hanging on to every word. When Rajdeep Sardesai took over the stage, it was not a glamour stricken, unruly celebrity-mad crowd that was listening to him. Instead, the audience mostly comprised of their own





erans both **Varied Discussions**

The discussions were also very varied. While on one hand, some speakers like Hyderabad MP and All Mailis-e-Ittehad-ul India Muslimeen (AIMIM) chief Asaduddin Owaisi tried to transform Talk Journalism into a political arena and announced his intentions of coming to power in Rajasthan, on the other hand BJP state president for Rajasthan, Satish Poonia sparked off a new discussion when he said that politicians should retire at the age of 60. He cited Nanaji Deshmukh who had stated that politicians should retire at the age of 65. This statement was quite interesting since the audience, especially the students then started asking if stalwarts like Prime Minister Narendra Modi,



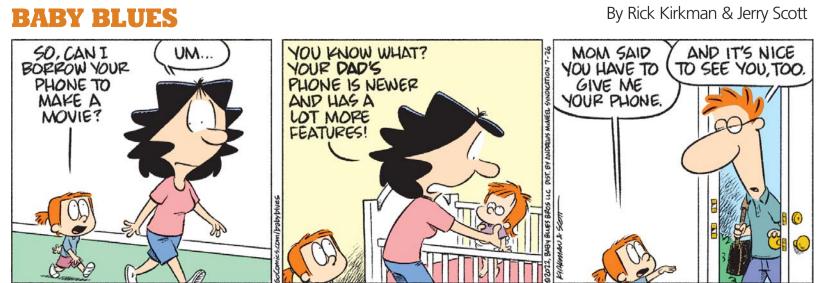
A

n yet another session, well known political biographer and author Sankarshan Thaku educated the audience about the dangers of journalism and told them not to be swayed by glamour or power or money even if their friends succumb to it.

Gehlot, chief minister of Rajasthan will give up the power play and embrace retirement that easily.

Later, a thought-provoking discussion ensued between Meenal Baghel, executive editor, Hindustan Times Naresh Fernandez editor The Scroll and Mukesh Mathur, state editor. Dainik Bhaskar Corporation where they talked about how people showed their dedication and zeal to their respective news organizations during the pandemic. Mukesh Mathur was quite matter of fact when he said, 'The newsrooms were always on during the pandemic. Journalists fell sick during the pandemic, rested, recovered and came back to their jobs. For us, it was business as usual in the sense that the newsrooms never

stopped working. In fact, in a session with Barkha Dutt. a student from the Christ University, Bangalore (there was a whole batch which attended), got overwhelmed and started weeping tears of joy on meeting her idol in person. Barkha Dutt, who was hav-



Sagarika Ghose discussing her book

ing a very interactive session with

her audience went to her and hugged

her to console her. I wonder if JLF

In yet another session, well

known political biographer and

author Sankarshan Thakur educat-

ed the audience about the dangers of

journalism and told them not to be

swayed by glamour or power or

money even if their friends succumb

to it. He said that these days the

trend is that a politician becomes

friends with the journalist and

bestows him with so many favours

that the journalist despite knowing

the stark truth of the politician can-

not write the truth. He talked about

how 'being friendly' with someone is

different than 'being friend's' with

someone. He cautioned them to

accept favours and advised them to

ask the right questions before taking

any decisions.

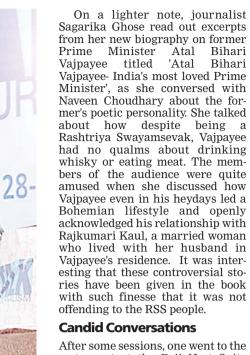
ever witnessed such a moment?

on Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

International Sudoku Day



o one can explain exactly why Sudoku has become so popular all around the world, but some people think it has to do with the human's innate desire to find order from chaos. In addition, when a person is able to finish a Sudoku puzzle, it offers a sense of accomplishment and productivity. It makes a person feel like a winner. And they are! In 2013, International Sudoku Day was founded by the World Puzzle Federation to pay heed to this unique, challenging and somewhat addictive game.



restaurant at the Brij Nest Suite hotel for some refreshments. As I waited, I was pleasantly surprised to see Rajdeep Sardesai saunter into the restaurant, sit at a neighbouring table and order some snacks for himself. Just out of every day for the next four days. There, I could talk to Sagarika Ghose, journalist and author of Atal Bihari Vaipavee- India's most loved Prime Minister I asked her the same question; what makes here attend Talk Journalism? She said, 'I think Talk Journalism is a very lively forum, whereas JLF attracts a more literature inclined audience My current book is a political biog raphy of Atal Bihari Vajpayee Previously I had written abou Indira Gandhi. Many people know these personalities and they are very interested in knowing the details of their lives. So, in Talk Journalism, it is a very engaged audience for the kind of books that I am presenting since lot of them are journalism students and I am myself a journalist. I have a partic ular fondness for being amongst journalists and journalism students. Moreover, there are also discussions about challenges facing the media, journalism, news gathering. So, those are all issues that are very close to my heart. I think we get down to a lot of basic issues regarding journalism, current affairs and politics.' Perhaps the only celebrity I

couldn't talk to was Asaduddin Owaisi, not because his best friend



Students of various universities attending Talk Journalism.

habit, I looked around to see if there were any PRs lurking around. Soon enough, another gentleman came and sat down at the same table. However, he wasn't the PR, he was a just a visitor at the event! That was surprising indeed. 'Excuse me sir.' I said as I addressed Raideep Sardesai half expecting him to secretly signal a PR person to protect him from a prying journalist. He smiled at me and said 'yes, tell me!' I introduced myself and asked him 'what makes you want to come to Talk Journalism and why is it so different from JLF?' He took a bite of his dosa and said, "Talk Journalism is a platform where all journalists come together. There is no other platform which offers this kind of an opportunity or environment for journalists to meet. I also see Avinash Kalla, the organizer of this festival working very hard and bringing different people from different walks of life in every session, every year. The audience is also quite vibrant where you get to meet young students and aspiring journalists. As compared to JLF where some people come just to increase their visibility or just have fun. Talk Journalism is a serious business and I love coming in such a forum

After a while, the man bid adieu to him. Soon, Rajdeep also finished his meal and got up. 'Sorry, I have another session,' he said as he walked out. After that, I made it a point to frequent the restaurant

was a PR person but because he was flanked by mean-looking, beefed-up security men who didn't know how to smile

An Ongoing Conversation

Avinash Kalla. the organizer of Talk Journalism believes that that there should be an ongoing discus sion about what journalism and ournalists truly are. 'People identify celebrities like Rajdeep Sardesai r Barkha Dutt as journalists, but there is more to this. I am a journalist, you are a journalist, there is more to journalism and media than what is advertised or depicted in the social media. Since its inception, I have been able to get people like Edward Snowden, the well known American author, to speak in this forum. The people who come here also make friends with other people and more ideas are generated. My idea is not to have masses attending this forum, I am only interested in people who would like to have meaningful discussions sessions that can help us under stand what's going on in the current scenario. Moreover. I think that this forum is all about celebrating those known and unknown journalists who work day in and day out to bring the truth to people So they too deserve their place in the sun Though we journalists cover celebrities, for once on this forum, let us also be the celebrities!

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Barkha Dutt, Arnav Kumar, Saarika R and Divyanshi Sumrav discuss the stress journalists go through

ZITS



Many people think today's family dog is spoiled and has it all too good. However, they often suffer from loneliness and the unrealistic social expectations of owners

family have it better than dogs that roam free when it comes to safety, nutritious food, and vet care. But it's a different story with regards to their mental health. You would need to travel far from Denmark to meet a dog that roams the village streets freely, without belonging to any one family, one that may seem a bit shabby and underweight. One could easily believe that "village dogs" would be better off in a safe and stable environment alongside a family in suburban

ogs that live with a



Denmark. But things aren't

quite that simple. The life of a typical Danish "family dog" comes with a price. Dogs have evolved to run freely among other dogs and humans, according to researchers at the University of Copenhagen's veterinary and animal sciences department and food and resource economics department. In a new study, the researchers compare the welfare of the modern family dog and the freeroaming village dog.

"Many people think today's family dog is spoiled and has it all too good. However, they often suffer from loneliness and the unrealistic social expectations of owners. This can eventuate in anxiety, depression, and even aggressive behaviour-problems that village dogs typically don't have," explains Iben Meyer, assistant professor, veterinarian, and first author of the study in Applied Animal Behaviour Science

Family Dog Challenges

The shared history of dogs and humans extends 10,000 years, to the time when dogs first became domesticated as pets. But over the past two centuries, the typical dog's life has changed dramatically. Dogs have gradually evolved from living freely on farms, where there were always people around and other dogs nearby, to moving into small urban homes, as pets which were acquired to satisfy their owners, with confinement and loneliness built into

ANYMORE!

#EVOLUTION

Family Dog



the equation In today's Denmark, where dogs are not allowed to roam freely in public spaces, the freeroaming village dog no longer

To compare the typical Danish family dog's welfare with something more "original," the researchers looked at studies of village dogs in Mexico. Along with many other less economi cally developed countries. Mexico is home to the majority of dogs in the world today. Many of these dogs live a life closer to their species' primal nature. "Until about 50 years ago,

ome for a large portion of their day. During that time, dogs are left to their own devices. It is a life that doesn't harmonize with the social needs of dogs, which need to spend time in the companv of humans and other dogs.

"Dogs that are often left alone at home or that haven't gotten progressively used to being alone can be affected by separation anxiety or other separationrelated issues like boredom and





there were still dogs in Denmark that lived more or less naturally. Since then, we have yanked them from their natural niche and created the modern family dog, which presents a few challenges for dogs," explains coauthor Peter Sandøe, professor of bioethics **Loneliness & Anxiety** For many families, 21st century work and institutional life means that people are away from

To make life easier for your dog, researchers suggest that it is very much about accepting that our dogs cannot always live up to everything we expect of them. Dogs are social and not designed to be home alone, all day long. This needs to be considered before getting a dog. Finally, we need to learn to take our dogs' differences into account.



frustration. At times, dogs vent their anxiety or frustration by gnawing on furniture, peeing on floors, or destroying homes. These are problems that prompt some owners to euthanize or give their dogs away. While most dogs suffer in a less destructive way, they don't necessarily have fewer problems," Meyer says. In sharp contrast to their largely lonely lives. we have extremely high expectations for how dogs should behave when with us. Preferably, a dog should be able to interact with other dogs, allow itself to be petted by

able to satisfy its owners-which is not always realistic. Unlike the village dog, which often roams freely with other dogs in small packs, and chooses with whom and when it wants to be social, the family dog does not experience the same natural form of socialization.

strangers, and in general, be

"Most dog owners have heard that socialization is important puppies need to learn to be with other dogs, etc. Therefore, people seek out places with many other dogs, expecting for their dog to be social on command The problem is that this is not very natural for a dog, which can risk having a bad experience that persists and can contribute to developing problematic behaviour," Sandøe says.

"Socialization is about giving a puppy positive experiences with other dogs and humans. If your puppy's boundaries are crossed or they don't have the opportunity to pull away, it won't have a good experience and could lead to problems with aggressive behaviour." Meyer adds.

Give Your Dog A Break

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman LIKE, ABOUT YOUR MUSIC?