



Expressions

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OMICRON THREAT but whither Covid protocols?

Anjali Singh

Just when the nation was regaining normalcy, the detection and rise of the Omicron variant of coronavirus brought with it chaos and concern all over again. India too registered Omicron cases in triple digits thus galvanizing the government to take all precautionary measures.

Despite an impressive delivery of 1.3 billion vaccination doses, the risky consequences remain as social distancing, wearing masks properly, and sanitization are more of a burden than a necessity even today, indicating to the reckless behaviour in terms of following safety protocols.

With the improved situation of the pandemic after the second phase, the festive season saw overcrowded markets and streets. On the part of negligence, Reena Chauhan, a housewife from Faridabad, puts the blame on people. "One can easily see that the protocols are just for name-

sake. One out of three person can only be seen wearing masks. We are failing to secure and protect ourselves. There are rules to be followed for our protection", she said.

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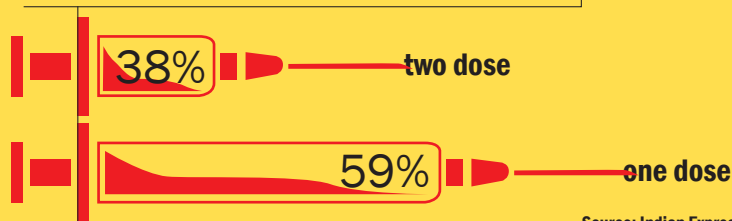


Photo courtesy: Anjali Singh



Researchers from the University of Hong Kong reported on December 15 that Omicron infects and multiplies 70 times faster than the Delta variant in the human airway

INDIANS RECEIVED VACCINE DOSES



Source: Indian Express

Editor's Desk

'How did the paper go?'

Exam halls abuzz, with fav query

Sick of being in online classes and examination for more than a year amid pandemic, students at Amity University Uttar Pradesh across its campuses finally and happily appeared in face-to-face mode of examination.



"We were literally pissed off with the online mechanism as we were not able to give our best," cribbed Zarin asserting that physical mode of classes and lab gave them a better understanding and knowledge of the course. "Physical mode of examination is real test of our studies," remarked Peush, who is pursuing engineering.

There was general happiness and satisfaction among students across the courses as they got an opportunity to share with their classmates and friends asking: 'How did the paper go?' Few preferred to get other's reaction rather than sharing their side on the performance. One could also see the usual panic and fear among students before going into the examination hall asking each other whether they had covered the entire syllabus?

The university prepared a well-structured and well-defined plan for the smooth conduct of examination and officials and faculty managing the Examination Control Rooms toiled for the entire month except for the weekly off to ensure nothing goes wrong. Covid protocols were enforced to the extent possible as students were scolded constantly for not wearing mask.

Academics is a continuing process and students who finished their exams after a short weeklong break will begin their new semester while first years will move into face-to-face examination beginning early next year.

However, with new Covid variant—Omicron on the surge, strict Covid protocols will be in place if we continue with the physical mode of classes and students must remember it is not a time to show any laxity but face the situation with utmost care.

Let us hope frontline health workers and those above 50 years with comorbidity conditions start taking their booster dose, if allowed by the government, to enhance protection from the virus. Learnings from the dreadful second wave in April should make all of us aware how we will cope with the situation without any lockdowns.

Let's hope for the best.

Prof (Dr) Sanjay M Johri

'Explore new opportunities with growing digital world'

Pandemic necessitated a transition towards the digital world. From education to shopping and even office work, the online world has seen drastic growth and like so, Digital Marketing has witnessed manifold success and to apprise students about its working and avenues, Amity School of Communication (ASCO) organized a two-day offline workshop with Alumnus, **Rahul Singh Rathour**, Founder, Thinking Out Cloud.



After long time everyone was witnessing offline workshop, meetings and greetings. The environment was full of excitement among guests and students.

With a fruitful approach, Rahul commenced the session by asking students about their familiarity with the digital world following which he revealed about his euphoria towards digital marketing and shared how Amity University fuelled his interest in this field.

Keeping the session in cognizance with the requirements of Digital Marketing, Rahul made the session interactive and discussion oriented. Sharing his presentation based on topic at hand, he weighed in on the technicalities, working and significance of Digital Marketing in the current scenario. He further elaborated about the varying

ALUMNI CORNER

terms, which one can come across in near future. "Everyone was cursing the pandemic for ruining the smooth functioning of different sectors but only a few are aware that Digital Marketing has reached new heights. Now, this field is serving a plethora of people, demanding their interest, efforts, grit and sheer determination", added Rahul.

While the first day of workshop focused on theoretical knowledge, the second day dealt with practical aspects of digital marketing. He taught students to effectively create their own effective website keeping in mind all the credentials and information that are required to make it effective. He further elaborated with the help of varying dashboards of websites, some deep delving insights and asked students to keep on clearing their doubts to get a better hang of it.

Rahul further said, "The digital world is expanding and bringing up new opportunities for those who are interested. There is lot to explore and learn in digital marketing." Keen to know about the future plans of students, Rahul readily guided students based on his own experience and asked them to start working from now to achieve their targets. The session concluded with a strong foundation laid for the aspiring digital marketers willing to explore the myriad of opportunities in this budding field.

- Ankita Bhatt

Enjoying campus life after pandemic blues

Muskan Bakshi

Finding a fun and reliable place with welcoming community and a buzzing cultural hub to both enjoy college life and study is dreamt of by almost every school-goer. While it takes quite a lot of research and time before you narrow down to such a place for higher studies, the infamous COVID-19 pandemic has added more concerns to the process.

Nevertheless, with stable condition after the second wave of COVID-19 and crossed fingers, the transition from the digital screens to campus life has laid foundations of new experiences for the freshers.

"Transition from 12th standard to higher education in a university is not just a step towards higher education but a transition to adulthood where you experience lot many changes to adjust yourself into a new life", said Bhavna, who just moved to Lucknow in the university hostel for a bachelor's degree.

"I was very excited to have independence, no restrictions and interference but it came with a lot of responsibilities to live life with a sense of maturity. Initially it was not easy to adjust as I had home-sickness and missing family and friends, but gradually I can see myself adapting to new environment and schedule. More than a 9-5 schedule of classes and making new friends around, I have learnt new lessons in my life" she added. Ruchika, another college student from Lucknow, had a different point suggesting she had a lot of negativity around but soon realized one must get away from these if one wants to focus towards a rewarding career down the lane.

The college environment is totally different from the school environment. While college gives you freedom, it also has an interactive and versatile environment, which catalyzes personal growth. Arun, pursuing engineering in the city, said: "I was very focused about my new career since day one and this is why I keep my friend circle very selective of like-minded students from the beginning."

It is true that college life is a rollercoaster ride, more so post the pandemic phase, but one should always remember that this is a golden opportunity that will not show itself again, of new learnings, and new perspectives.

Amity does help in students in giving different opportunities to showcase their talent, raise confidence, morale and overall development to be a better human being

Arun | STUDENT

Omicron threat but whither Covid protocols?

Continued from P1

Similarly, Raghavendra, a 45-year-old owner of Tandon Bakery in Sai Bazaar, Faizabad Road too castigated people, "We are ashamed to redirect people to wear their masks and follow physical distancing every day. Sometimes, customers take it in fun replying that they have been vaccinated. The arrival of a new variant, Omicron in this back-to-work environment is an answer for all of us on the failure and not expected action after surviving the two phases of the Covid-19."

While the perception has been cultivated in the minds – we are safe because we have taken both doses of vaccination, and this attitude is mostly present. Who knows if such an attitude could be the result of another disastrous phase? "Re-opening, and back to basics are merely due to the continuation of livelihoods. I have developed this habit of telling my close ones to wear masks, be more alert when going to crowded places. I believe, not only me but others are too scared of that dreadful phase again", remarked Khushi Singh, a college-going student from Lucknow.

The government is implementing the rules strictly, and the process of screening and testing are once again making headlines. It is clearly evident that the only condition to win this race is following safety guidelines together. Sumit Aggrawal, a 33-year-old working professional from Lucknow feels, "If we see protocol as a barrier to living, then we are again the only defaulters for getting in the vice like grip of this virus."

In reality, the protocols are not being followed even at a half rate out of a hundred percent. If the position remains at the same level, it will continue to reflect losses that will never be met in the future. The two devastating waves of COVID-19 have left a scar on masses as one way or the other everyone shared grief and loss. It is never too late to accept and incorporate the protocols into daily routine.



Students welcome offline exams after an 18-month hiatus

Ankita Bhatt

As the discussion was going on about the upcoming exam dates, instantly a question arose whether the exams would be conducted in offline mode or online mode. Though it was a genuine query that piqued our curiosity. A few days later, an alarm bell rang on our mobile phones, declaring that the exams are going to be conducted in offline mode eliciting a mixed bag of response from students.

Aishwarya Chandra, a student of Amity School of Communication mentioned, "After a long time, the exams look more frightening and dreadful as it has been more than a year since I appeared for one. It's been eighteen months since our tryst with offline exams and now it is reminiscent of days filled with haste, edginess, grit, confidence, anxiety, and zest. It's a welcome change."

The physical mode provides an environment for better learning, knowledge, nurturing, and cultivable skills. It will be difficult for the students to come out of their comfort zone and get back in physical mode, but effective and efficient learning is impossible in online mode. While a student of Amity Law

“After a long time, the exams look more frightening and dreadful as it has been more than a year

Aishwarya Chandra | STUDENT

Online mode provided an easier way to crack exams but switching back to on-campus examinations is imparting a greater sense of responsibility

Soumya | STUDENT

School, Sonali Singh added, "Offline exam is far better than online. We feel tempted without any gadget addiction. It also builds one's confidence. The student's on-ground knowledge is checked, where they stand academically."

During the pandemic, online exam mode was one of the best alternatives to ensure there was no disruption in academic session. Although it did have its drawbacks.

Vaishali Gautam, a student of Amity School of Communication, said, "After coming back to the conventional offline mode, we have realized how much learning was at stake in online mode. Though the idea of giving offline exams after such a long time was a bit scary, the worries went away after the first exam itself, and it felt good to get back to the normal practices of exams."

Whereas Soumya, another student of Amity School of Communication, feels, "Online mode provided an easier way to crack exams but switching back to on-campus examinations is imparting a greater sense of responsibility, which is very crucial for a student. It sounds quite intimidating, but it also comes with a sense of joy. The joy of discussing topics with friends before entering the examination hall, looking at them in the middle of the exams with zero hopes, oh and much more fun."

There is no bar to forgetting that online mode came out as a temporary thing so that we are not left behind, but it was not a proper test of knowledge. Physical mode is more reliable than virtual mode. After an unpredictable timeline, performing well in the physical mode of examinations is challenging and fun in itself to see 'where we really stand'.

HOLIDAY SEASON

To celebrate or not to celebrate? It's a personal choice, say people

Saumya Agrawal

Celebrations, in any form, come with bundles of joy, happiness, and smiles all around. Every celebration, be it Christmas's Eve, New Year's gathering, Diwali meet-ups or even your own birthday night, each celebration would provide you with enough joy to get you through the year. Or at least that's what society will have us believe.

In an ideal world where every celebration would be perfect and all those partying plans would always turn out just the way you want them to be, there are people who find it emotionally tiring to engage themselves in such gatherings, interact

My friends are planning an in-house party for Christmas eve. Celebrations come like a trigger to me as I have lost one of my dearest friends last year due to COVID on Christmas. Even if it has been a year, I do not feel like celebrating but I feel guilty for feeling this way when my friends want to celebrate

Ankit Kondal

with friends and strangers, and the rest of it? It is more like even if you pay them, some people couldn't make a happy face.

Ankit Kondal, who recently shifted to Lucknow for his studies, says "My friends are planning an in-house party for Christmas eve, which makes me uneasy as I have lost one of my dearest friends last year due to COVID on Christmas. Even if it has been a year, I do not feel like celebrating. But I feel guilty for feeling this way when my friends want to celebrate."

Meanwhile, people are celebrating festivals with the same sense of joy and happiness as before and with even more pomp and joy. Certainly, there is nothing wrong with it but when celebrations come with an added pressure of doing something and the added expectation of socializing with people when you do not feel like, it tends to make people feel even lonelier and take a toll on their mental health as well.

Ashu Chandna, a 27-years old residing in Lucknow, added "It was my birthday a week ago. My friends seemed more excited than I was. There is no 'switch to fun mode' for people on special occasions; celebrating things does not always guarantee enjoyment." He rather preferred to enjoy the day in his own bedroom, calm and composed. He further added "Do you not think that celebrations carry a heavy burden of accomplishment? During the days leading up to my birthday, it's almost impossible not to wonder how much, or how little, my life has changed in the last year."

Everyone's idea and definition of celebration is different. One must understand the same without con-



fining themselves to the norms that are defined by our social groups. Every person should be allowed to express happiness in the way they want without pre-defined rules or formats of celebration imposed by the society. Some are happy with less, like enjoying a quiet day out, away from the constant bustle of daily life and if that is their idea of fun, their peers, family and close ones should accept it instead of forcing them to participate. The illusion of happiness exaggerated on social media with perfect Instagram story or #celebrationgoals shouldn't define one's idea of fun.

Goa(n) Rhapsody



Photos: Sanjay M Johri

One of the most visited states of India, Goa has many beaches along its beautiful coastline, catering to millions of visitors every year. The beautiful beaches in Goa are famous across the country and it is the state associated most with beautiful beaches

Goa is synonymous to many things that are indicative of a life without worries and carefree measures. Goa is to India what Ibiza is to the world.





Big fat Indian weddings vs low-key 'I-do' moments

Drishti Vanaik

The glamorous attires, eye-catching venues, stunning décor, wedding shenanigans and of course the timeless rituals, weddings are a vivacious mix of jittery feelings and excitement of going from one family to another and starting a new life. While the extravagance of the affair depends on how deep the pockets of the bride and groom's families are, Indian weddings are always swoon worthy.

Bollywood celebrities with their decadent ceremonies and the glam of their star person have redefined the wedding culture and have given their fans an experience to remember with these intimately luxurious affairs.

Speaking of intimate, the recent #VicKat wedding created a buzz amongst the audience. The bars of being secretive and private have certainly been raised by the two actors. "Excited to see the pictures that will come out, though the guests have been requested not to use social media or even their phones, but paparazzi is always there to capture moments", said Mahek, a teenage girl who is also an avid social media user.

Sources like Pink villa, PopXo, iDiya etc constantly revealed the minute pieces of information about the wedding with trending captions like, "The fairy-tale wedding of 2021". In the view of it, Arshma Minai, a college-going student added, "Celebrity weddings are always very beautiful to look at. Be it the wedding of Virat Kohli & Anushka Sharma, or Ranveer Singh & Deepika Padukone etc, it has always been something that people like to talk about and then plan their own dream weddings.

The other side of flamboyant and luxuries wedding culture are the exquisitely low key and subtle weddings of actors like Rajkumar Rao



and Varun Dhawan, who snuck away from the prying eyes of the media to celebrate their special days and gave their fans a huge surprise. "We knew about the long-term relationship of Patralekha & Rajkumar Rao and also the fact that they are going to get married someday but we had no clue as to how and when", mentioned 21-year-old, Mihir.

Coming down from the star-studded ladder, the wedding season has been full of hustle and bustle for us all too. Anju Kapoor, mother of a groom nervously added, "It's very hectic and challenging, especially if the other family has a totally different culture. There are clashes between the rituals and point of views as we are a Punjabi family and my daughter in law is from a Marwari family." Lucknow weddings are just as glamorous with wedding lawns like Balrampur Gardens all bedecked and dazzling and hosting numerous events that have also caused the weekend traffic to double up. Noor Fatima, a 12th grader, cheerfully added, "Food, dressing up & clicking tons of pictures is why weddings are a pleasure to go to".

But there is another side to this

gilded coin for people who are not part of the weddings, like residents and neighbours who have to suffer due to the loud music and noise. December being also the month of examinations for students hence it is particularly testing due to the noisy atmosphere. At places like the Sahara States Club, the DJ goes on till 3 in the night & causes disturbance to the residents", sighed Priyanshi Gupta, a college-going student.

Along with the difficulties faced by the people, the financial, physical and mental pressure on the bride and groom and their families is daunting. "To start a new life altogether is not easy. It comes with new challenges. Your life changes as soon as you take the "Saat Pheras". It's intimidating but equally exciting", mentioned Garima Malhotra, a newly-wed.

Weddings are enthralling but tiresome as well. The amount of time and money invested is immense, but it is all worth it with the smiles, sparkles, and the blessings of the elders. At the end of the day new beginnings have all always been celebrated in the Indian culture with pomp and splendour.

Grand-parents 'thank' Gen Z for making them tech-savvy

Kashika Nigam

There could not be a more beautiful way to say how important it is to be digitally educated in 21st century when a 10-year-old girl helps teach her grand-parents how to make a video call & stay connected with family at least during weekends.

In a generation when it is not possible to live without our mobile phones, our elders especially grand-parents found it really difficult to cope up with technology and felt bad when they could not make use of it.

Ashwi, 12, could not see her grandmother deprived of this aspect and decided to teach her learn how to make a video call and the use of other Apps in her mobile phone. "My grandmother was full of joy when she could see my uncle, aunty etc on a video call and thanked me," recalls Ashwi.

Irrespective of any age, if you have technology and a device you can not only make use of it, but its benefit can help you stay connected with family and friends. During the two lockdowns in the current pandemic elders specially grandparents, practically in every Indian household, were taught by children how to use latest technology.

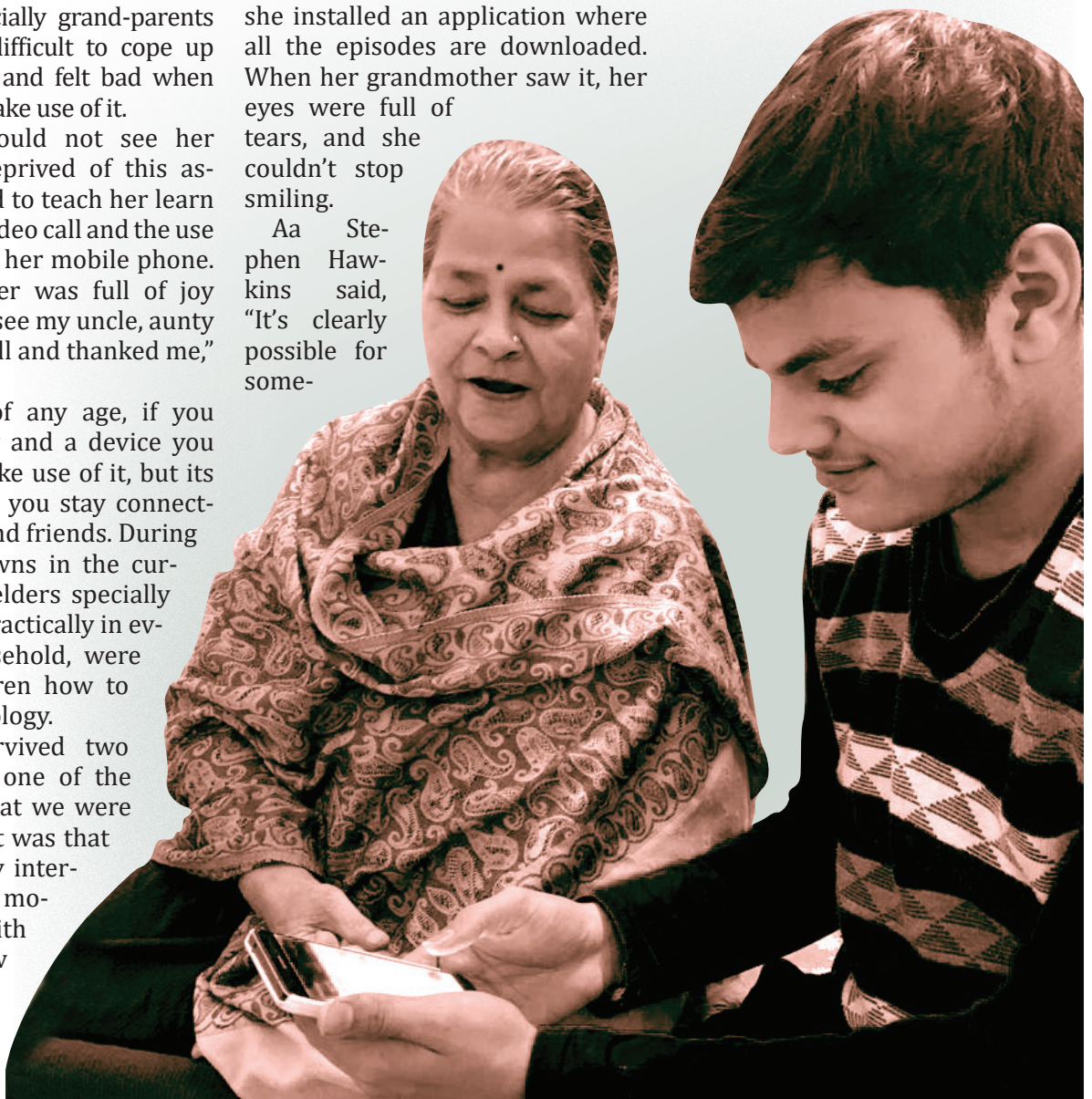
We have survived two lockdowns and one of the main reasons that we were able to survive it was that we had our fully internet accessible mobile phones with us. The last few years taught us how important it is for us to be on a

digital platform from where we can be connected with the rest of our family and the world.

We have seen this in every household that the grand-parents always want their grandchildren to have a smile on their face, but as time changes the happiness givers and receivers in the house also changes. When Ashwi saw the love and devotion her grandmother had for religious shows on TV and would wait eagerly for the next episode daily, she installed an application where all the episodes are downloaded. When her grandmother saw it, her eyes were full of tears, and she couldn't stop smiling.

Aa Stephen Hawkins said, "It's clearly possible for some-

thing to acquire higher intelligence than its ancestors". Today's children are definitely a bit more advanced than the previous generation and it will be the same for the next generation. The thing which is more important is that this generation does not limit the technologies to themselves but also teach it to others. If a person in nowadays time will be digitally knowledgeable then half the battle of today's world will be conquered.



INDIAN COFFEE HOUSE

The heritage hang-out point of Lucknow

Riddhima Srivastava

Photo courtesy: Riddhima Srivastava

Coffee is not just another beverage; it is a nice conversation starter, good rejuvenator, and a great mood lifter. Coffee shops are more than just a place that serves good coffee, they are places for intellectual discussions on everything ranging from politics to economy, and social issues to the latest fashion trends. Lucknow's Indian Coffee House is one such place that has been a hub for intellectuals, poets, writers, social-activists, journalists, artists, trade-union leaders, political kingpins, professors, doctors, and common people since 1938. Owing to its remarkable history, it can also be called as 'The Heritage Hang-Out Point' of Lucknow.

The seniority-juniority culture of coffee house was and is still quite famous among people. "It was a culture over there that senior always used to pay for the coffee of juniors, it was also an etiquette that juniors did not join the discussions of seniors", recalls Ravi Bhatt, eminent historian and writer while talking about the culture of coffee house. "Lucknow's famous 'Tikdi', which comprised three renowned writers Amritlal Nagar, Yashpal and Bhagwati Charan Verma, also used to visit coffee house for discussions and exchanging thoughts over a cup of coffee", adds Bhatt.

The Indian Coffee House is believed to have been visited by renowned personalities such as Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, Dr Ram Manohar Lohia, Feroze Gandhi, Atal Behari Vajpayee, Acharya Narendra Dev, Majaz Lakhnawi, Nagarjuna and many other intellectuals from various fields. It is said that former Indian Prime Minister, Late Chandra Shekhar, used to visit the Indian Coffee House so much that he had a fixed table over there.



Being a preferred place for all kinds of important debates and discussions for the intellectuals, it is said that one can walk into the Indian Coffee House, take a cup of coffee and simply join the ongoing discussions. "One could easily get an idea of what is going to be the outcome of elections by carefully observing the discussions going on in the coffee house," says Pradeep Kapoor, a veteran journalist. "Former

the management of the coffee house also changed as it went in the hands of a private firm and a sudden drop was seen in the number of visitors of the coffee house. "When the coffee house went to a private firm, the management completely changed its ambience and sadly it no longer remained a discussion spot for intellectuals", laments Ravi Bhatt, when asked about the reason of decrease in strength of people visiting the coffee house.

On the other hand, Rakesh, general secretary, Indian People's Theatre Association said digitalisation as one of the reasons for drop in visitors to the Coffee house. "After digitalisation people are connected to each other on social media more than the number of people in real life", he quips.

Nonetheless, with such an intriguing history, the Indian Coffee House can be called as a place worth holding on. Although the culture of coffee today has shifted to a more luxurious side with new coffee places and gigantic fanaticism enjoyed by places like Starbucks, people are still trying to bring back the glory of the Indian Coffee House again after years of silence to ensure that the legacy of the Heritage Hangout Point of Lucknow does not come to a standstill but continues for generations to come.

Indian Coffee House is believed to have been visited by renowned personalities such as Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, Feroze Gandhi, Atal Behari Vajpayee and many other intellectuals from various fields.

Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Vir Bahadur Singh was also a regular visitor of Coffee House, he used to come there to know about problems faced by common people. He used to come over there without any security, which was shocking for us" he added.

As time is changing and Hazratganj has also had several developments,

Be pawsome!

Help keep stray animals warm, fed this winter

Garima Dobhal

Winters in India are harsh. Snowfall, low temperatures, short days with no sign of the sun and long nights are made more horrific for those without means. While we prepare for the weather by slipping into our warmest sweater and boots, stray animals face the punishing weather each day. Humanity demands that we must do something to help these poor animals suffering in the streets or anywhere near our homes and societies.

"Helping stray animals during winter is the noblest work, which we people really need to do. Many shelters and volunteers help animals, but they cannot serve all the strays of the world. If every individual makes sure to take care of even one stray this winter, they can survive the harsh cold. If you must pitch in a little money to do this, then you should, because no amount of money is bigger than humanity", said Aditya Singh, a 20-year-old college student who loves animals and believes that the task is simple but has humongous consequences.

A well-fed animal is additionally more equipped to battle infection and disease. Avoid canned foods since they're more likely to freeze as the temperature drops. "Though I love animals, we can't protect all of them, and my family won't let me keep stray animals within the house because they're fearful of dogs and cats, I do my part by feeding them," another college student Maanvi Kumari explained. She adds, "In winter, stray animals suffer from variety of ailments, and by assisting them, we are making their job easier."

"I love animals because they are peaceful creatures who never retaliate unless provoked, says Yashika Katyal, a 24-year-old college student, who helps provide shelters to strays in the winters.

2021 ENDS WITH 'NIGHT CURFEW'

Covid rears its head again

Rinil Srivastava

We are at the end of this year. 2021 has been a rollercoaster ride of both good and bad tidings. While January heralded a battle against Covid with the launch of vaccination drive in the country, the year ended with 'night curfews' being imposed from Christmas till New Year in many states including Uttar Pradesh, as the new virus variant Omicron reared its ugly head.

A look at the ups and downs of this dramatic year only reasserts the belief that every bad day makes people suffer and good times prove to us that change is the only constant in the world.

It began in January with a vaccination campaign depicting the fight to win against Corona. Then came the 'Pawri ho rahi hai' meme, which made us laugh and chuckle for the entire month. The Olympic and Paralympic Games 2021 brought a mixture of sweat and sweetness to the year. Also, Prime Minister Modi announced the repeal of three farm bills that had been a source of contention for a year. Further, India lost the T20 World Cup, and Rohit Sharma replaced Virat Kohli as the team captain.

"It is true, change is the only constant," says Ansh Verma, a 17-year-old student from Lucknow. "Although online classes were going on, I missed the days before Corona came, especially the fun and happiness. So, the reopening of schools and colleges this year pleases me, but the offline tests appear like a challenge to us."

"It was a bumpy year", recalls Twinkle Kapoor, a working woman from Lucknow. "We are scared due to the pandemic, and we were sad when we lost the World Cup. However, with the news of vaccination and, at the end of the year, the surprising news of Miss Universe made our hearts warm and glad."

Don't forget about the IFS officer who gave a stern reply to Pakistan at the UN, which went viral on social media, with many users appreciating Sneha Dubey's reactions. Air India returned to Tata after a gap of 68 years. Our nation celebrated 1 billion Covid-19 vaccines in October. After Google, Microsoft, IBM, and Adobe, Twitter now has Parag Agrawal as its new Indian CEO. The loss of Chief of Defence Bipin Rawat in a chopper crash was a shock. Moving forward, India's Harnaaz Sandhu has won the Miss Universe 2021 title, indicating that the year wants to conclude on a good note.

Kishore Awasthi, a retired professor from Varanasi says, "Every year brings with it a plethora of positive and negative situations as well as learnings. As a resident of Varanasi, the inauguration of Kashi Vishwanath Dham corridor closes the year on a positive note."

Life is all about learning from both good and bad days, thus with each passing year, we must remember every lesson we learned to accelerate our future. Plus, to get you excited for the New Year, let's turn a page of anticipation along with all the enchantment that comes with it. A fresh year with endless possibilities is waiting for you.



2022 RESOLUTION

Learning to live with the 'not so new normal'

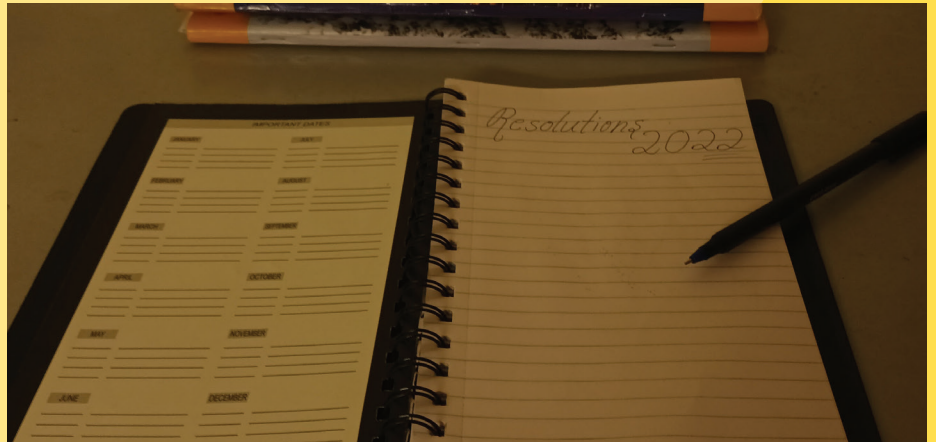
Vaishali Gautam

'Change is the only constant'—nothing can better define the uncertain times we all have been through and with which we are still grappling. The ability to adapt to changes is no more a skill of choice but a sheer necessity.

With the virus coming up with new mutations and variants now and then, it doesn't seem to be leaving us anytime soon. By now, people seem to have adapted to this reality to a great extent and are evolving towards normalizing the new normal, which is not so new anymore and it is with this perspective that they are getting ready to welcome 2022.

It is hard to believe that we have completed almost two years with the pandemic. Last year was full of uncertainties and by the end of it, the only thing one prayed for was the vaccines. The worse second wave hit us with the cry for oxygen, medicines, and life, taking a toll on humanity. However, that time too passed, and life started returning to normal but alas Omicron cast its shadow at the fag end of the year.

Perhaps that is why the way people celebrate New Year has also changed and so have their resolutions. Deepshikha, a medical student from Ranchi said, "Like any other virus, Covid too seems to be staying with us for a long time. I think by now we all have consciously or subconsciously accepted this fact. To cope up with the ever-changing scenarios, a resolution for me is to adapt myself more to



this hybrid world and to face challenges with a more positive and patient outlook."

Nupur, a Botany Hons student from Ranchi sharing her perspective said, "We have wasted a good amount of time postponing our plans till the situation becomes normal but now as many experts have made studies and declared that the virus will stay with us at least for a few years, I resolve to start working on my plans, dealing with the uncertainties and just keep moving ahead."

But the arrival of the new variant Omicron at the end of this year has left everyone with the question, 'Will life ever get back to normal?' With many educational institutions opting back to the hybrid mode that had just left us, uncertainties seem to persist

in our lives for long. With the drastic change in our lives during the pandemic, our perspectives of looking at things and our practices have also changed accordingly.

"On the one hand, the second wave showed how humanity has gone down to a level where certain people were taking advantage of the opportunity to earn money while

putting so many lives at stake and on the other side it showed how so many people came together to help others to get oxygen cylinders and other requirements on time. During this course, I too became a part of a group and resolved to keep helping people in need", added Sushmita, a 3rd year engineering student from Bhubaneswar.

The discussions with people about their resolutions for 2022 made it quite clear that the pandemic has changed the way people welcome the new year.

With the drastic change in our lives during the pandemic, our perspectives of looking at things and our practices have also changed accordingly

“ To cope up with the ever-changing scenarios, a resolution for me is to adapt myself more to this hybrid world and to face challenges with a more positive and patient outlook

– Deepshikha

I resolve to start working on my plans, dealing with the uncertainties and just keep moving ahead

– Nupur