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A nostalgic trip to Hogwarts 20 years after the first train

Pavana J
The Harry Potter series is not just a book or film franchise for many as they have numerous emotions associated with the story and its characters. Titled Harry Potter: Return to Hogwarts, the 20-year anniversary special brought together the original cast, including Daniel Radcliffe (Harry Potter), Emma Watson (Hermione Granger), and Rupert Grint (Ron Weasley), and the crew in a poignant trip down the memory lane. In between the fun moments, there are genuinely profound insights into how the cast dealt with fame much early in their lives, and what it meant to be a part of a worldwide cultural phenomenon. The special beings at the Platform Nine and Three-Quarters, much like the movies, show-runners have clearly gone through a great deal of trouble to take fans back to exactly why they fell in love with the films in the first place: The lighting in the interview scenes matched the lighting used in the movie, the actors and directors are surrounded by familiar props; they paid great attention to every detail. Alternating between the vibrant and the emotional, Return to Hogwarts conjures up several bright flashes. It, however, only sporadically transports us to nooks and crannies that the films and the continuously disseminated trivia associated with them did already. It is at best a feel-good movie about the world that the films were located in.

Ex-army Chiefs condemn genocide call against Muslims; urge President, PM to act

Bincy Joseph

Five retired chiefs of staff of the armed forces, hundreds of dignitaries from more than 26 civil society organisations and concerned citizens wrote an open letter addressing the President, Ram Nath Kovind and the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi expressing their displeasure with Hindutva leaders and monks who gave open calls for genocide of Indian Muslims at various events in Uttarakhand's Haridwar and Delhi. The letter also mentions targeting other minorities like Christians, Dalits and Sikhs. Previous Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Laxminarayan Ramdas, Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat, Admiral Arun Prakash, Admiral RK Dhowan, and

former Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal SP Tyagi-all signed the letter. The signatories of the letter expressed their anxiety over national security in the wake of the inflammatory speeches. "We are seriously perturbed by the content of speeches made during a three-day religious conclave called a Dharm Sansad, of Hindu Sadhus and other leaders, held at Haridwar between 17- 19 December 2021. There were repeated calls for establishing a Hindu Rashtra and, if required, picking up weapons and killing of Indian Muslims in the name protecting Hinduism" the letter stated. "A large number of people had gathered in Delhi and publicly took oath resolving to make India a Hindu Nation. One speaker made a call



Dharm Sansad held at Haridwar

Twitter

to the army and police to pick up weapons and participate in the 'cleanliness drive' (safai abhiyan). This amounts to asking the army to participate in the genocide of our citizens, and is condemnable and unacceptable," read the letter.

The letter appealed to the Government, Parliament and the Supreme Court, to act with urgency to protect the integrity and security of our country. It said the right to religion is a fundamental right of the citizens and deplored polarisation in the name of re-

ligion. It urged the President and the Prime minister to take immediate steps to curb such attempts of violence and open calls for genocide.

The letter also urged the leaders of all political parties 'to condemn such hate calls for what is tantamount to genocide of Muslims'. It also pleaded the political leaders to restrain their cadres and urged them to 'show more commitment to values of Secularism, Fraternity and Justice for all citizens. "India's Armed Forces, the Army, Navy & Airforce, together with CAPFs and Police, are responsible for National Security – external and internal. All the above have sworn to uphold India's constitution and our secular values" the letter added.

AIDYO opposes the hike in prices of mobile tariffs, flags the monopolisation tendencies of Telecom co's

Pushparaj C

The AIDYO (All India Democratic Youth Organisation) organised a protest at Mysore Bank Circle opposing the hike in prices of mobile tariffs for recharges and data packs. Vinay Sarathy, the president of the organisation said, "... after the pandemic, the inflation has affected the common man in terms of increase in travel expenses, hikes in recharge rates among others. Before such a decision to hike the tariffs are made the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has to be



Protest held at Mysore Bank Circle

Vinay Sarathy

involved; the government has to have a meeting of all stakeholders including the consumers." BSNL has become less popular compared to other net

works, and in August 2021, many BSNL employees were given VRS, he said. "The monopolisation taking place in the telecom market has to be taken note of by

the government and it should tweak the policies in favour of consumers. He said that when mobile phones were introduced in the market, it was a luxury product. "It's a necessity now. Due to online class, it's a dependency too." When Jio started giving free SIM cards the TRAI didn't have any issue with it, he said. "Consumers were made dependent on it and at the end of the working-class people, house wife's, students now bear the brunt of the hike," he added.

Doctors call off protest after Central Government's assurance

Blessy Jeremy

Following the assurance from the Centre that the issues raised by the protesting resident doctors would be resolved soon, the medicos have called off their strike and have reported back to work. Under the leadership of the Federation of Resident Doctors' Association, hundreds of doctors went on strike last week demanding the Centre to immediately resume the counselling of PG-NEET, 2021. The strike made the national headlines when the protestors were taken into custody and slapped with various sections under the IPC. "The government has realised the need for immediate NEET counselling. It is high time the next batch arrives since the Covid cases are increasing. The sad part is that the decision was taken only after the strike," said Dr Namratha the former president of the Karnataka Association of Resident Doctors (KARD). Dr Naveen, president of the KARD said, "The government should have done this before, without the need for protests, so that new doctors would have joined us two months ago. Such a delayed decision is not right on the government's part."

Eminent scholars allege Sanskritisation of education under NEP

Arushi , Pavana J

The New Education Policy was criticised by eminent scholars and scientists on Sunday, as one that seeks to Indianise the education system while instilling a sense of pride in India without referring to the rich, and diverse ancient cultures. Anita Rampal, speaking at a webinar on the Indian Knowledge System organised by All India Save Education Committee said the Indian Knowledge System, a part of the New Education Policy (NEP) is not inclusive as it does not

include the indigenous or tribal knowledge systems of the South and East. She said that NEP fails to address the special tribal practices such as folklore, Ayurveda and various other fields that they focused on. "The main issue with the Indian Knowledge System and the NEP is that it fails to identify the difference between the indigenous and existing scientific knowledge, and does not mention. It ignores the other tribes, regions and cultures such as that of Tamils that also make up the Indian Knowledge System while shines light

only on the Sanskrit literature and Vedas," she said. Prof. Soumitro Banerjee an eminent scientist and professor of IISER (Kolkata) spoke about how the NEP does not include the freedom struggle or the renaissance thinkers of India which play a vital role in understanding the history of the country. He lamented the fact that many politicians in India speak a great deal about how the ancient Indians used medical technology like plastic surgery, and many theories in astrology and astronomy but don't give them due credit.

Food delivery partners left to toil amid New Year rush

Fiza Ziyad

BENGALURU: As food delivery platforms Swiggy and Zomato witnessed a record-breaking number of orders on New Year's Eve, the onus was on delivery executives to distribute the orders on time. On December 31, executives had to make back-to-back deliveries throughout the night amid the Omicron scare, while the rest of India celebrated New Year from the comfort of their home. Vinod Kumar, a 'Zomato delivery partner spoke to the Beacon and said that he did not sleep at all and could not even go home

for the New year, as he kept receiving orders continuously. "It was stressful as there is a lot of pressure on us to make the delivery on time." He also added that the crowding at restaurants was also a cause of concern as most of the restaurants had delivery persons waiting in queue to collect their orders at the same time. Both Swiggy and Zomato took to social media to share the news of crossing 2 million orders in India on New Year's Eve, however, the struggles of the delivery partners went unacknowledged.