

The Role of Universities in Preserving and Promoting Folk Dances

"Unity in diversity is India's speciality." This slogan is an integral part of India's culture and serves as its mirror. Our culture is a blend of folk traditions, arts, rituals, lifestyles, food habits, customs, festivals, songs, music, dances, and theater. Mahatma Gandhi once said that in folk songs, the earth, mountains, and rivers sing. During festivals and fairs, people sing folk songs in melodious voices, keeping social unity alive. Thus, it is essential to preserve folk songs and folk cultures to sustain the spirit of community.

Most of our folk songs originate from rural areas and are connected to the life cycle and livelihood of the people, such as farming, animal husbandry, and craftsmanship. The rural community, known for its hard work, finds relief from daily exhaustion by singing and dancing in the evening. The tradition of folk songs and dances is ancient, dating back to when there were no modern means of entertainment.

Rural folk created songs and dances related to every aspect of life—from prayers for a good harvest to expressing gratitude after overcoming natural calamities.

India's folk dances reflect the country's diversity. From agricultural rituals to festive expressions, these dances convey a wide range of emotions and meanings. Each region has its unique identity



and culture, which is displayed in its folk dances. Over time, as modern entertainment has evolved, these traditional art forms have been influenced and sometimes overlooked, leading to challenges for folk artists in terms of both recognition and survival.

In this era of changing social and economic conditions, universities have stepped in with a positive approach, organizing folk dance competitions during youth festivals. These competitions keep commercialization out and focus on preserving the authenticity of the dances. I've had the privilege of serving as a judge at the folk dance events at the University of Mumbai and have

seen firsthand how students beautifully replicate folk dances from various states, sometimes even making them more captivating than the original performances.

Universities like Mumbai University have been contributing significantly by pro-



moting Indian culture through folk dance competitions. The university's students, drawn from 354 colleges across various regions, passionately perform folk dances from different parts of the country. The commitment and energy of these students are commendable, and it's no surprise that Mumbai University has consistently excelled at national-level competitions.

The Youth Festival Coordinator, Nilesh Save, who is a multifaceted artist himself, said, "By starting a folk dance competition in the youth festival, we have created history. We never viewed folk dances as just performances; rather, we saw them as a revolution-

ary step to preserve and display India's glorious culture." He also pointed out that while people often believe that today's youth have forgotten Indian culture due to the influence of the West, students participating in these events are an exception, proving otherwise. During the youth festivals, special attention is given to the authenticity of the folk dances, including live accompaniment by musicians. Colleges go to great lengths to find and present traditional and lesser-known folk dances, even if they face challenges in mastering them. Students show a keen interest in dances from Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Goa, as well as

dancers. One can imagine why the students of Mumbai University have inclination towards sister states of India. For last many years' people from various states have migrated to the finance capital of India for many endeavors and became Mumbaiers. At the same time they maintained relationships with their home states. Even the younger generation also loves and respect for diverse

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culture making Mumbai as mini India. These folk dance performances by university students are a testament to their love for culture, and their

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As part of my interactions with fellow judges and cultural scholars, it has become clear that preserving India's cultural heritage requires collaborative efforts from all sectors—cultural, educational, and governmental. My experience as a judge, alongside experts like S. Rajagopalan, Krishna Kate, Ravi Durugkar and Dr. Tapas Samantray have shown that India's diverse folk dances, when performed by passionate students, can rival even professional artists in quality. Like Mumbai other Universities are making a significant contribution to safeguarding their regional and India's folk culture by organizing these youth festivals, ensuring that future generations remain connected to their rich cultural roots.

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IEEE Day 2024 Celebrations at Sir Padampat Singhania University, Udaipur

Udaipur: Sir Padampat Singhania University (SPSU) proudly inaugurated its IEEE Student Branch as part of the global IEEE Day 2024 celebrations. The event introduced the IEEE Student Branch to students and faculty, emphasizing its mission to advance technology and promote collaboration between academia, industry, and research.

The program commenced with a ceremonial lamp-lighting and an offering to Maa Saraswati by the dignitaries. Prominent guests gracing the event included Dr. Anand Krishnan Plappally, Professor at IIT Jodhpur; Mr. Sanket Dangi, Co-Founder of KansoCloud India Pvt. Ltd.; and Dr. Bharat Singh Deora, Professor at JRN Rajasthan Vidyapeeth University. The distinguished guests were honoured by SPSU's Vice Chancellor, Prof. (Dr.) Prithvi Yadav, Dean of FCI Dr. Prasun Chakrabarti, Deputy Dean Prof. (Dr.) Alok Kumar and Registrar Prof. (Dr.) Uday Prakash R. Singh. The ceremony featured a presentation on IEEE's global initiatives and the benefits it offers to

members. The IEEE Student Branch was officially inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor along with the chief guests. The newly elected office bearers were announced as follows:

- Chair: Mitali Thapa (B.Tech CSE, III Year)
- Vice Chair: Toshik Sani (B.Tech CSE, III Year)
- Secretary: Ashwani Kumar Sharma (B.Tech CSE, III Year)
- Treasurer: Hani Ayman (B.Tech CSE, III Year)



In his speech, Prof. (Dr.) Prithvi Yadav emphasized the role of professional societies like IEEE in enhancing academic and professional growth. He also lauded the efforts of the students and faculty in setting up the branch and highlighted the Women In Engineering (WIE) initiative's global impact.

Dr. Anand Krishnan Plappally, the chief guest, delivered an insightful keynote speech on the importance of technology and innovation. He introduced IEEE's collaborations with other chapters and educational tools like TryEngineering and Manga Comics for science learning.

Mr. Sanket Dangi shared his industry experiences, inspiring students to actively participate in IEEE activities. He emphasized the value of con-

tinuous learning and spoke about the role of IEEE in shaping his career in cloud computing, along with insights into his startup KansoCloud.

Dr. Bharat Singh Deora discussed the role of IEEE in research and development, explaining how IEEE communities and resources foster innovation in academia and

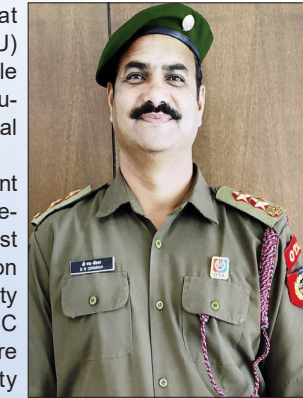
industry. The event also featured the prize distribution for IEEE Ideathon 2024, an inter-college competition held on September 30, 2024. Out of 65 participating teams, 36 were selected to present their ideas on campus. The winners received trophies and cash prizes. Winners of the WIE Poster Making Competition, also held on September 30, were honoured with special awards. The ceremony continued with the distribution of membership certificates to the core committee members of the IEEE Student Branch. The certificates were presented by the Vice Chancellor, Dean, and other dignitaries. The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Chandani Joshi, IEEE SB Coordinator at SPSU. She expressed gratitude to the dignitaries, faculty, and students for their efforts in making the event a success. The program was coordinated under the guidance of Dr. Kamal Kant Hiran and Dr. Chandani Joshi, Assistant Professors from the Faculty of Computing & Informatics, with the collaborative efforts of the IEEE team members.

SPSU's Lt. Chouhan Commended by Air Commodore S. Sharma

Udaipur: Sir Padampat Singhania University (SPSU) has been making remarkable strides in promoting holistic student development and societal transformation.

The university's commitment to fostering well-being and creating a more equitable and just society has earned recognition for Lt. (Dr.) D S Chouhan, Deputy Dean (SW) and Associate NCC Officer, SPSU. Air Commodore Satyendra Sharma, Deputy Director General (DDG) of NCC Rajasthan Directorate, recently commended Lt. (Dr.) Chouhan for his exceptional services to the NCC unit of University under 10 RAJ battalion NCC Udaipur. SPSU's NCC Unit, under the visionary guidance of Hon'ble Vice Chancellor and President Prof. (Dr.) Prithvi Yadav, has been instrumental in the development of students and the overall process of nation building. The endeavors include the establishment of a firing range and obstacle ground on campus, designed to meet standard norms and ensure the smooth functioning of NCC activities. Furthermore, the NCC Unit at SPSU frequently organizes blood donation camps, tree plantation drives, and various other activities that contribute to the betterment of society.

These initiatives exemplify the University's commitment to creating a positive impact and fostering a sense of responsibility among students. Through its inclusive approach to education, SPSU continues to nurture students who not only excel academically but also develop as compassionate and socially conscious individuals.



Geetanjali Hospital Raises Breast Cancer Awareness with Pink Tambola Event

Udaipur: Geetanjali Hospital organized a grand Pink Tambola event in celebration of Pink October. The chief guest for the occasion was Maharaj Kuwarani Sahib Nirvitti Kumari Ji of Mewar. The event was led by Mr. Rishi Kapoor, COO of Geetanjali Hospital, along with DGM Marketing Mr. Kalpesh Chand Rajbar and Mrs. Deepmala Mewada. Approximately 500 women from various groups in Udaipur participated in the event.



The program began with a Saraswati Vandana and the lighting of a lamp. The leadership team of the hospital welcomed the chief guest. In her address, Maharaj Kuwarani Ji emphasized the importance of cancer awareness and stressed the necessity of regular self-examinations for breast health. This step is crucial for raising awareness and ensuring timely treatment against serious illnesses like breast cancer.

Mr. Rishi Kapoor highlighted the significance of Pink October, pointing out that breast cancer poses a major health challenge in India and that increasing awareness is essential. He stated that Geetanjali Hospital continuously contributes to this cause in the community.

During the event, a panel discussion was held featuring senior specialists from Geetanjali Hospital, including Dr. Renu Mishra, Dr. Pooja Gandhi, Dr. Suman Parihar, Dr. Kalpana Gupta, Dr. Sushma Mogri, Dr. Bhamini Jakhethia, and Dr. Shabdika Kulshrestha. The discussion covered various aspects of breast cancer, and attendees were encouraged to ask questions. The chief guest also participated in the Q&A session.

Additionally, a play focused on breast cancer awareness was performed by medical college students, which deeply moved the audience and received much appreciation. Students also presented a performance themed around cancer, featuring a cricketer, which captivated everyone.

Following the discussions, the Pink Tambola game took place, with women participating enthusiastically and winning prizes. Four winners received significant prizes: an LED TV for first place, a refrigerator for second, a washing machine for third, and a microwave for fourth, along with nearly 50 other electronic prizes.

Women enjoyed taking photos at the selfie points, and at the end of the event, they left their fingerprints on a memory wall to commemorate the occasion.

Raising Awareness of Breast Cancer

Udaipur: Breast cancer is emerging as a significant health concern for women in India. Alarming statistics reveal that 16% of women aged 55 to 64 screened for breast cancer are currently battling the disease, with Rajasthan showing a diagnosis rate of 30% in this age group. As Breast Cancer Awareness Month begins, experts emphasize the urgent need for awareness and early detection.



Dr. Subhadrata Das, a Senior Consultant in Surgical Oncology, highlighted the importance of educating women about symptoms and encouraging regular screenings. He stated that empowering women with information can bridge the gap between diagnosis and treatment. Technological advancements have improved early detection, making awareness initiatives essential. Dr. Manoj Mahajan urged health facilities to collaborate with community organizations for workshops and free screenings, while Dr. Sachin Jain emphasized that prioritizing awareness and access to treatments can improve outcomes.

IAPSM RajCon 2024: A Turning Point in Public Health

Udaipur: The highly anticipated IAPSM RajCon 2024 kicked off today at RNT Medical College, hosted by the Department of Community Medicine. This two-day conference (October 18-19, 2024) gathers esteemed public health professionals, medical experts, and policymakers under the theme "Marching towards SDGs: Solving Public Health Challenges for Better Health and Well-being."

The conference aims to align healthcare strategies with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and enhance public health systems across India. Experts will discuss critical issues, including malnutrition in tribal areas, communicable diseases, mental health, and challenges within urban and rural healthcare systems. Dr. Vipin Mathur, a senior public health expert and former head of the Department of Community Medicine, plays a pivotal role in the conference. His advocacy for local-level solutions addresses the unique needs of underserved populations, emphasizing collaboration among government agencies, healthcare providers, and communities. Key highlights include scientific sessions featuring cutting-edge research, paper presentations focused on SDGs, and discussions dedicated to health equity. The conference features notable guests such as Dr. A. Kulkarni, National President of IAPSM, and Dr. Kirti, Organizing Chairperson.

IAPSM RajCon 2024 not only serves as a discussion platform but also aims to catalyze change in public health. Guided by Dr. Mathur's visionary leadership, the event promises to yield meaningful outcomes, particularly for marginalized communities. As Dr. Mathur stated,

"Public health is about ensuring that policies translate into real change for those who need it most."

NIMS University Strengthens Ties with Veer Kunwar Singh University

Ara, Bihar, 23 October 2024: Prof. Amarika Singh, Pro-Chancellor of NIMS University and former Vice-Chancellor of Mohanlal Sukhadia University, met with Prof. Shailendra Chaturvedi, Vice-Chancellor of Veer Kunwar Singh University, to discuss collaboration in higher education.

During the visit, Prof. Singh invited Prof. Chaturvedi to serve as a "Distinguished Guest" at the upcoming international conference of the Indian Economic Association (IEA) hosted by NIMS University. The two academicians explored opportunities for joint initiatives and proposed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) focusing on the New Education Policy, cultural heritage, and Indian knowledge traditions. Prof. Singh emphasized the goal of exploring educational opportunities at both national and international levels, while Prof. Chaturvedi highlighted the importance of preserving cultural heritage through this collaboration. The anticipated partnership aims to enhance educational experiences for students and researchers, fostering significant progress in the field of higher education.

Neerja Modi School Wins Excellence in Experiential Learning

Award

Udaipur: Neerja Modi School has been awarded the 'Excellence in Experiential Learning Award' for the academic year 2024-25 by Education World, a leading education magazine group. Dr. Mahendra Sojatia, Chairman of the institution, highlighted that this recognition is based on one of the most comprehensive survey processes in education. The school is dedicated to holistic student development, focusing on innovative programs, hands-on activities, and emotional intelligence. The award was presented to Director Sakshi Sojatia by Chief Editor Bhavin Shah at a ceremony on October 17, 2024, attended by prominent education leaders in Gurugram.



Three-Day Training Session for MBA Students at Sangam University

Bhilwara: Sangam University's Training and Placement Cell organized a three-day training session for MBA students aimed at enhancing their skills and professional preparedness. Deputy Director of Training and Placement, Dr. Anurag Sharma, informed that the first day featured an online aptitude test, an elevator speech introduction challenge, and a special session titled "From Stress to Strength: Building a Healthy Mindset," conducted by Neha Srivastava, author and founder of Caring Roots.

This session focused on stress management and building mental resilience.

On the second day, students participated in an online test, a resume-building workshop, and a mock group discussion, led by Placement Manager Sakshi Patwari. The third day included a group puzzle activity and a session on "Smart Money Moves: The Essentials of Financial Planning," conducted by financial planning expert Chidrup Jain. The students gained valuable skills and insights from this three-day training, which will greatly benefit their professional careers.

Nakul Dev Singh and Archi Crowned Mr. and Miss Fresher

A vibrant Fresher's Party was organized by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at Bhupal Nobles Postgraduate College. Enthusiastic students gave impressive performances, showcasing their talents with energy and excitement. Dean Dr. Renu Rathore extended her best wishes to the new students, encouraging them to develop their personalities with confidence and values, helping them shape their future paths. Associate Dean of Arts, Dr. Jyotiraditya Singh Bhati, along with other faculty members, welcomed Old Boys Association President, Mr. Bhanu Pratap Singh Solanki, as the chief guest. Event Coordinator Dr. Manisha Shekhawat shared that all participants displayed their skills through rounds like the ramp walk, introduction, and Q&A sessions. Nakul Dev Singh Chundawat and Archi were awarded the titles of Mr. and Miss Fresher, while Bodhraj Singh and Yashvandanani were named Mr. and Miss Senior.