

December 2024
FESTIVALS edition

LOUDSPEAKER

The official student magazine of KEVI Lordswood



LOUDSPEAKER

Welcome to the **FESTIVALS** edition

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

Festivals are a way of celebrating a wide variety of occasions, from religious devotion to cheese rolling! They are used not only to bring people together but also, crucially, to spread joy and celebrate. During this festive period we wanted to bring light to a wide variety of festivals and how and why they are celebrated.

Happy reading!

Gabby Karanfila
Year 12

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FESTIVAL

BRINGS THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER.

Bedriya Fanta

Festivals are a great way to bring people together and create a sense of belonging and connection. They can be a great way to build community spirit and foster a sense of pride and ownership in a particular area. They can also provide an opportunity for people to come together to celebrate their culture, customs, and traditions.

By bringing people together, festivals can also really help to create a sense of unity. They can provide a platform for people to come together and share their experiences and stories. This can help to create a sense of understanding and appreciation for different cultures and backgrounds.

Festivals can also provide a precious opportunity for people to come together and enjoy the festivities. This can include music, dance, food, and other activities. This can be a great way to bring people together and create a sense of community.

Overall, festivals are a celebration of many of the things that make our world such an amazing place: community, togetherness, traditions, cultures and history. Learning about festivals from other nations and cultures also teaches us to respect others' pasts, beliefs and traditions - and these are valuable lessons in a modern, multicultural world.

Festivals are, ultimately, a great way to celebrate the culture and heritage of a particular region. They are a great way to bring people together and to build a sense of community. Analysing the cultural significance of festivals can help to better understand the cultural values and traditions of a particular area. This is as important for those from the region - perhaps opening their eyes to truths about themselves and their heritage that they had never realised before - as it is for others seeking to learn more about the world and those different to them.

When analysing the cultural significance of festivals, it is important to consider the different elements of the festival. This includes the type of activities that are offered, the type of food that is served, and the type of music that is played. It is also important to consider the symbolism of the event. For example, certain symbols may be used to represent the values and traditions of the community. In short, festivals help us to understand and celebrate who we are.



Diwali is celebrated by millions worldwide, symbolising the victory of light over darkness and good over evil. It is celebrated by many faiths, including Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains.

During Diwali, many people decorate their homes with candles, colourful lights and *rangoli* (patterns made of coloured powder, rice or flowers). Fireworks are also set off to celebrate this occasion as they are believed to scare away evil spirits. Furthermore, sweets are a big part in Diwali and people eat many sweets including *jalebis*, *barfis* and *gulab jamun*.



DIWALI

'The Festival Of Lights'



Hindu celebration

For Hindus, Diwali celebrates the return of Rama to his kingdom after 14 years of exile. It is also a time to worship Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth. Hindus also celebrate the destruction of the demon Narakasura.

Sikh celebration

For Sikhs, they celebrate the release of Guru Horgobind Ji, the sixth Guru, from imprisonment in 1619. And with him, he also brought 52 Hindu Kings who had been similarly unjustly imprisoned.

The Power of Diwali, Festival of Lights

By Kayal Jayalakshmi Pavendan

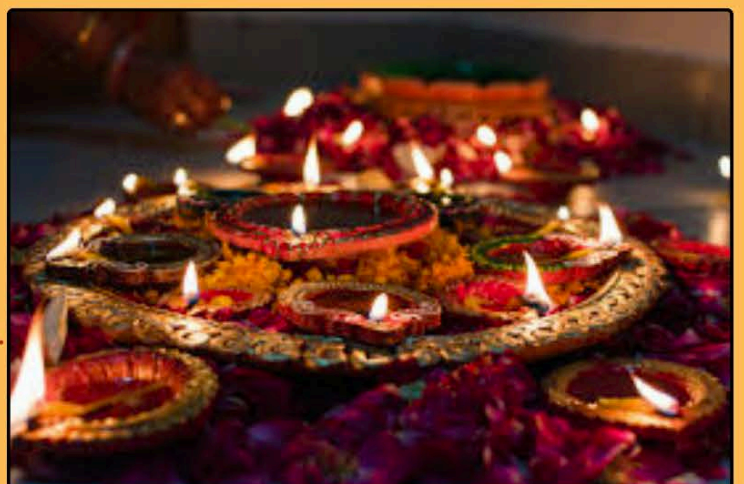


love,
lights,
and joy

Diwali, also known as the Festival of Lights, is one of the most significant and widely celebrated festivals in India and among Hindu communities worldwide. It symbolizes the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil. Traditionally, the festival usually spans five days, with each day having its own significance and set of rituals. People celebrate by decorating their homes with oil lamps or diyas, colorful rangoli patterns, and festive lights. Fireworks illuminate the night sky, and families come together to share sweets and gifts. Diwali is also a time for prayer and reflection, with many people performing pujas to deities such as Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, to welcome luck and success in the coming year. The festival fosters a sense of community, joy, and renewal, making it a cherished occasion for millions around the globe.



"Brighten the world with
Diwali's gleam, as joy and light
weave a radiant dream."



Wireless Festival

How it started?

Wireless Festival is an annual rap and hip-hop music festival that takes place in London, England, United Kingdom, and is owned and managed by Live Nation. Debuting in 2005, the festival's earlier years primarily featured rock and pop artists; since 2010, the focus has shifted largely towards hip-hop and now involves more genres.



Target audience

Overall, Wireless is a festival with a target audience ranging from around 15 to 25 years old. It is mainly for people who are young adults. All under-16s must be with a guardian. It also works in partnership with the police to keep people safe.

Notable artists that attended previously

- Asake
- Byron Messia
- Central Cee
- Destroy Lonely
- Doja Cat
- Don Toliver
- Fridayy

For more information about Wireless Festival and what makes it so special, visit the official website.

www.wirelessfestival.co.uk

TIPS ON HOW TO BE ECO-FRIENDLY DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Maysoon Sami

As the holidays approach, everyone is starting to celebrate the festivities with splendour. However, sometimes we forget that we should try to be mindful about the world around us as climate change is becoming a major issue. So let's give the earth a gift too by being aware and treating the environment around us well!

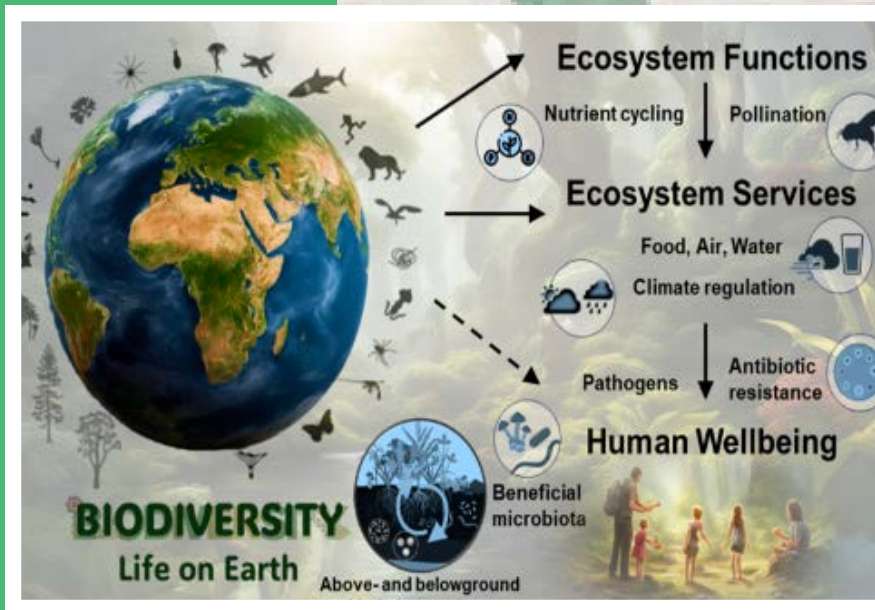
We can try our best to do this by using these tips this holiday season:

- Gifting an experience rather than an object gift (e.g. a fun day out and this can minimise gift wrapping and, in some cases, expenditure)
- Switching to LED holiday lights (LED's use lower amounts of energy and are more energy-efficient)
- Consider sustainable party outfits (as fast-fashion doesn't have the best effect on our planet)

- Re-using/recycling gift wrapping paper and gift bags (reduces greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global climate change as there won't be as much waste going to landfills)
- Keep food waste to a minimum (it rots and releases methane gas, contributing to global warming, when it could have been eaten or disposed of sustainably)

We hope you all consider the effect of doing these small favours to our planet. Have an amazing holiday from the RRSA team!





Ecosystems are the substructure of life on earth. They give us fresh water, food, resources and clean air. They also change the climate, and help protect us against natural disasters and help support biodiversity.

Nonetheless, human activities like pollution, climate change and deforestation are threatening the stability of many ecosystems worldwide. Biodiversity is important for maintaining the health of many ecosystems. They provide us with food and medicine and much more, and also help aspects of ecosystems like pollination and soil fertility.

The Importance of Ecosystems for Human Survival

Kiyha Broomes

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Climate change is caused by the huge release of greenhouse gases (gases like carbon dioxide) into the atmosphere. These strong gases tend to trap heat that causes earth's temperature to rise, which leads to many natural calamities such as floods and wildfires. Whereas ecosystems like oceans play a crucial role in absorbing and taking in carbon dioxide. This helps to reduce the extent of the impact of climate change.

Conservation also plays a big role in promoting sustainable improvements to our world. 'Conservation' includes efforts such as renewable energy and sustainable agriculture that help promote developments to establish and protect the long-term health and well-being of our planet.

As a result, ecosystem conservation is vital for human health as our ecosystems provide us with many sources and help protect us against natural disasters. They also help support biodiversity and reduce the impact of climate change, as well as promoting sustainable development.



FEMICIDE

A frightening front of female fatality

by Roshni Samra and Taran Sangha

Femicide or feminicide is a term for the killing of females due to their gender. Femicide, the unfortunate reality faced by too many women, is a pressing problem that plagues today's society. With staggering statistics revealing that, in 2020, out of 81,000 female victims of homicide, 47,000 were killed by partners or other family members, the question arises: why are women still viewed as disposable ?

Sabina Nessa, a 28-year-old British Bangladeshi woman was murdered on her way to meet her friend in a park. Her walk shouldn't have taken more than five minutes but she was found dead the next day. This was incredibly upsetting as it happened just 6 months after Sarah Everard's death - perhaps you would expect some positive change regarding women's safety but, alas, not. Coverage of her death was a lot more minimal, perhaps suggesting that the race and cultural background of victims does play a part in public perception. Despite statistics showing that brown and black women are being murdered at higher rates, missing or murdered brown or black women do not receive the same media attention or resources. Society has so far failed to address how factors like race, class and religion intersect to exacerbate the risks of femicide for women of colour especially.



In 2021, the abduction, sexual assault and murder of Sarah Everard by a policeman while she was walking home sparked national outrage in the UK and highlights the dangers women may face. Olympic runner Rebecca Cheptegei was murdered at 33 after her former partner set her on fire at her home in Kenya. She had two daughters, one present during this horrific gasoline attack. Former Miss Switzerland finalist, Kristina Joksimovic, 38, was murdered and 'pureed' with a hand blender by her husband. These grotesque murders portray the urgent need to address the systemic issues that allow such violence to persist.

'White feminism' is a concept which offers a perspective that solely focuses on the issues of white women, while arguably neglecting the unique struggles faced by women of colour. This viewpoint can be particularly harmful when discussing femicide, as it may overlook systemic racism and cultural attitudes towards women that contributes to violence against them. This exclusion can perpetuate a cycle of violence and silence, making it crucial that everyone is recognised and voices of those most affected by femicide are amplified.

In many cases of femicide, honour-based violence is too often the problem. 'Honour-based violence' refers to acts of violence that are committed to supposedly protect or restore the 'honour' of an individual or family. This type of violence can stem from traditional, ingrained cultural beliefs or gender roles, leading to people feeling justified in using extreme measures against what they believe have brought shame or dishonour. This way of thinking can drive someone to kill their daughter, sister or wife just because they did not agree with what the woman did.



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HAJJ

by Hiba Islam



What is Hajj and when does it take place?

Hajj is a religious obligation and is one of the five pillars of Islam. Hajj takes place each year across several days during the month of Dhu al-Hijab, the 12th and final month of the Islamic calendar.

How do Muslims perform Hajj?

Before Muslims begin their Hajj or Umrah, they must be in the state of ihram. This is a sacred state for Muslims as they are seen as equal in the eyes of Allah.

It traditionally begins in Mecca, where pilgrims take part in Umrah pilgrimage.

This consists of tawaf, circling the Kaaba anti-clockwise seven times, and running between the hills of Safa and Marwa. They do this in order to connect with Hajar when she was running between the hills to find water for her child dying from thirst. Pilgrims then spend a day praying in the valley of Mina, before heading to Arafat, where they repent and atone for their sins.

What is the purpose of Hajj?

As one of the five pillars of Islam, the purpose of Hajj for Muslims is to fulfil our spiritual duties to Allah (SWT) and show our submission to Him.

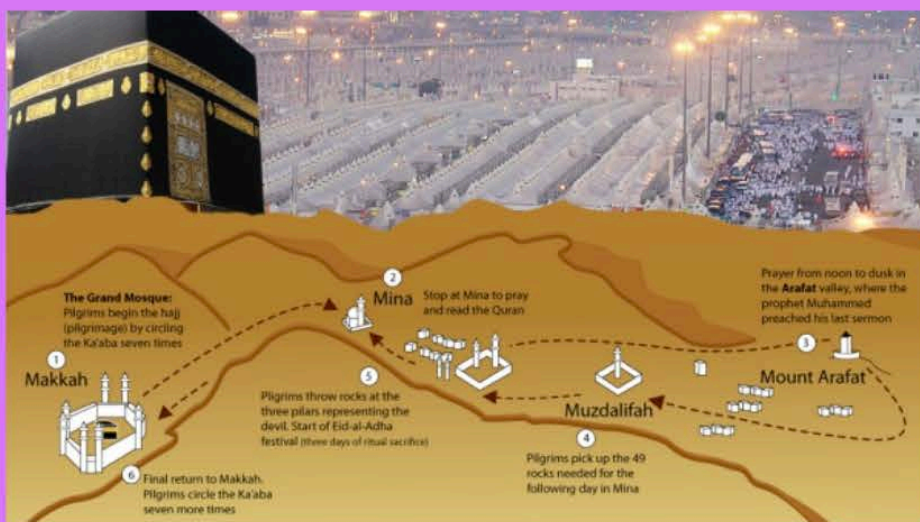
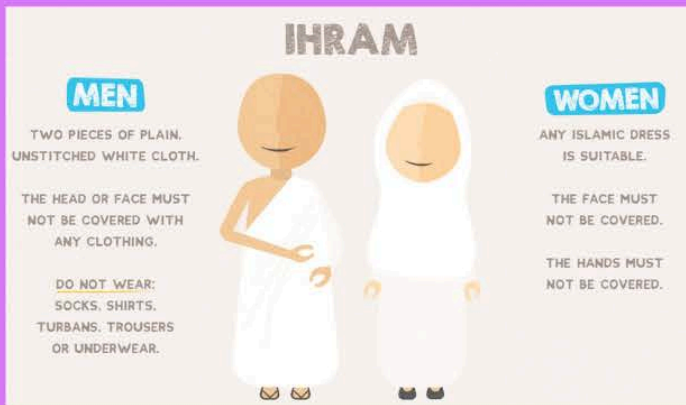
Muslims believe Hajj offers a chance to wipe past sins and start anew before Allah.

Additionally, the act of performing Hajj with increased Taqwa (being God-conscious) is rewarded with Paradise.

What is the difference between Hajj and Umrah?

Hajj is required by those who are able to undertake it and Umrah is a voluntary pilgrimage

Hajj can only take place between the 8th and 12th or 13th of Dhul Hijjah each year, whereas Umrah can be performed at any time of the year.



Hajj lasts approximately five to six days (depending on the sighting of the crescent moon), whereas Umrah can be performed within a much shorter period – even a day! There are 18 steps to perform in Hajj, whereas there are fewer in Umrah.

Loudspeaker: Festivals

NIGHT OF THE RADISHES

HAYAN M ABID

Night Of The Radishes is an annual event held on December 23rd in Oaxaca, Mexico, dedicated to the carving of oversized radishes to create scenes that compete for prizes in various categories.

The festival dates back to the colonial era, and it has since become a highly anticipated event that draws both locals and tourists. The centerpiece of the celebration is the carving of large radishes, which are sculpted into intricate and creative figures, often depicting scenes from Mexican culture, history, folklore, and religious

The origins are somewhat unclear, but it is believed to have started during the colonial period in Oaxaca in the 16th century. The tradition may have begun when Spanish settlers introduced radishes to the region, and indigenous Oaxacans began using them to create artistic and decorative pieces, possibly as part of the Christmas festivities. Over time, this practice evolved into a competition and celebration

The event is held in the Zócalo, or main square, of Oaxaca. Hundreds of radish carvers, including professional artisans and amateur participants, spend hours preparing their designs. The radishes are often sculpted into figures like nativity scenes, animals, religious symbols, and other traditional Mexican motifs. Some displays are elaborate and complex, while others are simple but still incredibly creative.

In addition to the radish carvings, the festival also includes food stalls, traditional music, dance, and other forms of entertainment, making it a lively celebration that brings together the local community



Key Features of the Festival:

- **Radish Sculptures:** The primary attraction of the festival, with intricate designs that take days to prepare.
- **Nativity Scenes:** Many of the carvings are inspired by Christian nativity scenes, a reflection of the holiday's religious significance.
- **Oaxacan Culture:** The festival showcases local traditions, including the use of mole (a rich, flavorful sauce), tamarind candies, and other regional specialties.
- **Competition:** There are often contests for the most creative or elaborate radish designs, and prizes are awarded for the best pieces.

The event has become an important part of Oaxaca's holiday celebrations, offering a fun and creative way to celebrate Christmas while highlighting the region's deep cultural roots and artistry. The Night of the Radishes has grown in popularity over the years, attracting visitors from around the world who come to witness the impressive displays and experience the festive atmosphere.





SAUDI NATIONAL DAY

ROMESSA KHAN EXPLAINS THE HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SAUDI ARABIA'S NATIONAL DAY

Saudi National Day is celebrated every year on September 23rd. This marks the day, in 1932, when the Kingdom of Nejd and Hejaz was officially renamed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by a royal decree from King Abdulaziz ibn Saud (known mononymously as 'Ibn Saud'). In 2005, it was made a public holiday and today it is one of the three non-religious holidays celebrated in the country alongside Saudi Founding Day and Saudi Flag Day.

The history behind the Kingdom of 'Saudi Arabia' and its previous Saudi states

In the 18th century, the first Saudi state was formed when Muhammad ibn Saud (founder of the Saud dynasty) allied with a religious leader. This state expanded but eventually fell in the early 19th century because of Ottoman interference.

The second Saudi state was created in 1824 by Turki ibn Abdullah, but it faced internal struggles and outside pressure, especially from the Ottoman Empire. By the late 1800s, the Saudis were pushed back into the Nejd region (now in central Saudi Arabia).

In the early 1900s, Abdulaziz ibn Saud rose to power, uniting the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula. In 1932, he officially founded the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by combining Hejaz and Nejd into one nation.



Celebrations

The national day is celebrated in every corner of the country with grandeur, pride and unity. Fireworks light up the night sky in major cities such as Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dammam and especially near the shores of the Red Sea. Many cultural events are held to showcase Saudi traditions, exhibitions, and folk shows. There are often street parades and performances. Streets, shops, and public spaces are decorated with flags and banners. Citizens often display Saudi flags and wear clothing in the national colours - green and white - to show pride.



La Force Noire (The Black Army)

Statues all around France,
Representing the soldiers who sacrificed everything -
But not showing what they sacrificed:
Africans from France.

Over 120,000 needed, yet their story wasn't told much.
Instead, most think about the white and forget the black.
Africans were believed to be different -
That they were more aggressive,
That they could feel less pain.
So were thought to be perfect soldiers:
Africans from France.

A tribe named the Wolof tribe
Were thought to be more warlike than the rest,
Giving them the higher chance of death.
But no one could care less:
All they needed was to win against the rest.
Africans from France.

We should remember the Black Army,
Because they were forced, commanded, compelled
To join a war, a cause, a belief -
And yet everybody thinks about them less and less.
And so try not to forget about the real heroes: the
Africans from France.

Humaira Akbar



Remembrance Poetry

Both Year 8 and Year 9 have studied poetry during English lessons this term. Two students – **HUMAIRA AKBAR** and **CIARA EMMERSON** – share their respective poems about war that marked Remembrance Day 2024.



Remember

The shot is fired through the sky:
The soldier waves his last goodbye.
The hearts of many start to sink -
Silence crosses as they think
Two minutes, without a word.
The only sound that can be heard
Are the wings of a bird.
The war is over: people drink;
A silence crosses as they think
Of the lives that were spared.
Remembrance day must be shared.
Two minutes - one day - yearly,
To remember those who loved us dearly

Ciara Emmerson



MY MUSIC TEACHER'S GLASSES



YEAR 9 STUDENTS HAVE EXPLORED SHORT STORIES IN ENGLISH LESSONS THIS TERM. ONE OF THESE STORIES – ‘MY POLISH TEACHER’S TIE’ – IS THE INSPIRATION FOR THIS WONDERFUL PIECE OF WRITING BY AAMINAH OMER.

My music teacher’s glasses were always sliding down her nose, as if they were trying to escape. I’d watch them wobble every time she conducted, her baton cutting through the air like a sword slicing invisible strings. She never noticed me, tucked away at the back of the room, hiding behind the big piano. Not that I minded. I preferred being invisible.

Miss Carmichael was as strict as they came. Her sharp eyes, magnified behind those thick glasses, seemed to pierce straight through you if you hit a wrong note. She wore them low, just on the bridge of her nose, and glared over the top at us like we were notes in the wrong key. The class feared her, but I always felt there was something more, something softer, hidden beneath her stern face and precise movements.

One day, after class, I stayed behind. I don’t really know why. Maybe it was the way her glasses had slipped halfway off her face again, and she looked tired, like the weight of all the music in her head was just too much. Or maybe it was because I knew that behind those cold lenses, there was something I needed to see.

“You still here, Carter?” she said, adjusting her glasses with a frustrated push. Her voice was clipped, as usual, but there was no bite in it today. Her tone felt... almost weary.



“I, um, I wanted to ask about the concert,” I mumbled, not meeting her eyes. The truth was, I didn’t care about the concert. I just wanted to hear her speak.

She sighed, resting her baton on the piano, and for a moment, she looked out of the window. I could hear the faint sound of birds chirping outside, their song sweet and free, unlike the rigid structure of the music in our classroom.

“You play well,” she said softly, surprising me. “But you never play for yourself, do you?”

I blinked, not sure what to say. How could she know that? I had never told anyone how the piano keys felt cold under my fingers, how the notes echoed in my head like hollow whispers. I played because I had to, because it was expected. But I had never played because I loved it.

She turned to face me fully, her glasses slipping again. This time, she didn’t push them back. Instead, she looked at me directly, her eyes softer, gentler. “Music isn’t about perfection. It’s about feeling. You need to find your own song, Carter.”

The words hung in the air, like a note played softly on a violin. I nodded, even though I didn’t fully understand. But something in the way she spoke, in the way her glasses no longer sat perfectly on her face, made me feel like I wasn’t just a name on the register anymore.

As I left the classroom, the weight on my shoulders felt a little lighter, and for the first time, I wondered what it would feel like to play a song that was truly mine.

Does Hollywood drag films and series on for too long?

IBRAHIM AURANGZEB *questions whether Hollywood lets its biggest hits - series like 'Prison Break' and films like the 'Fast and Furious' franchise - go on past their best...*

I think we can all agree that, to some extent, Hollywood does allow shows and films to go on for too long. Sometimes, when it seems like a film franchise or series is set for a fitting ending, you suddenly see a social media post or public billboard advertising the same show or movie is releasing another season or instalment. And, being the fan you are, you end up seeing it. And - BOOM - the season or movie is a flop, a flop that might even ruin the reputation of the show or movie. This means that even though we want more of that specific programme or film, the truth is that good things need to end - or else they will have a downfall, and that then creates a negative legacy for the franchise. People can end up hating the show or movie.

Take, for example, 'Fast and Furious': a big hit, an amazing franchise that has been going on for two decades. When will it end?! Or will it carry on forever? From street races and police chases to getting pursued by military and big criminals, the movie has taken a turn and the theme has changed. What will happen next? Let's talk about 'Prison Break'. The show that gets people thinking and talking about justice. This show, at first, was amazing, gripping, exciting - but the downside was the drawn-out nature of the plot. So many seasons to escape a prison? It could have been 5 or 6 episodes, but this show had other plans. The series consists of 5 seasons - but are they all as good as the first couple? Maybe not. Does Hollywood care? Maybe not.



HOLLYWOOD

The Importance of Reading

As an A-level English Literature student, ENRICA OPOKU urges us all to recognise the importance of reading

Like it or not, reading is crucial to our development. When you don't read, it makes it more difficult to be confident and competent in areas of learning, writing, spelling, fluency and comprehension.

What is more, reading has been scientifically proven to lead to better mental wellbeing, social skills and strong relationships. It's also clear, according to various separate studies, that reading aids brain development and cognitive ability. Bearing all of this in mind, it goes without saying that reading is able to improve academic performance.

There are a variety of genres of literature that fit into various categories of fiction and non-fiction.

Fiction is imaginary, while non-fiction is literal and based on true events. Reading can be for education but also for entertainment. There are a variety of genres, for example; drama, fantasy, sci fi, romance and many more.



I mostly enjoy fiction books: my favourite one is 'Ace of Spades'. I take English Literature A-level and adore the pieces of literature that we're studying - like 'Othello' and 'The Great Gatsby' - which make me love the subject even more.

Benefits:

- Mental stimulation
- Stress reduction
- Stronger analytical thinking skills



About me and reading...

I grew up in Italy and joined school in England in Year 3, not knowing a single word in English. Reading English books weekly led to my development in the language, which later on led to English being the subject in which I most excelled at secondary school. I have also enjoyed reading a lot of drama and romance books throughout my teenage years.

The Changing Face of Beauty

How has the perception of beauty changed throughout the years?

FARAH ELKHOLI

History of Beauty

Over the years, the perception of beauty has changed significantly. Whereas nowadays the perception of the “perfect” woman is one with sloped noses, clear skin, and thick, full lashes. Yet in ancient civilisations the concept of beauty was using natural resources such as khol. In addition, women would follow the ‘trend’ of having pale skin and thin eyebrows to fit into society, and to be perceived as the perfect woman.



‘Beauty’ today...

Lash extensions and eyebrow lamination:

Nowadays, in order to fit in with society’s perception of ‘beauty’, women often seek to modify their features. For example, they apply lash extensions to enhance their features or they laminate their eyebrows to make them appear thicker and darker.

Many women feel pressured within society, as they believe that they don’t fit into the beauty standards.

Whether it is having acne, and not the ‘perfect’, clear skin desired, or concern about the thinness of their lips, much of the pressure to look a certain way is due to the vast number of fashion ‘trends’ or advertisements on social media.



The changing face of ‘beauty’ has led to fierce debate: why should women feel pressured to look a certain way? Is it even a problem if a woman wants to change her appearance? Do men face the same level of pressure in terms of expectations and perceptions of beauty?

LOUDSPEAKER – DECEMBER 2024

BATTLE OF THE ORANGES



RAHIMA SHUJA, SALEHA AHMAD & KENISHA BOBBILI explain the format and origins of the bizarre 'Battle of the Oranges' festival in Ivrea, a town in Northern Italy...

HOW IT ALL STARTED

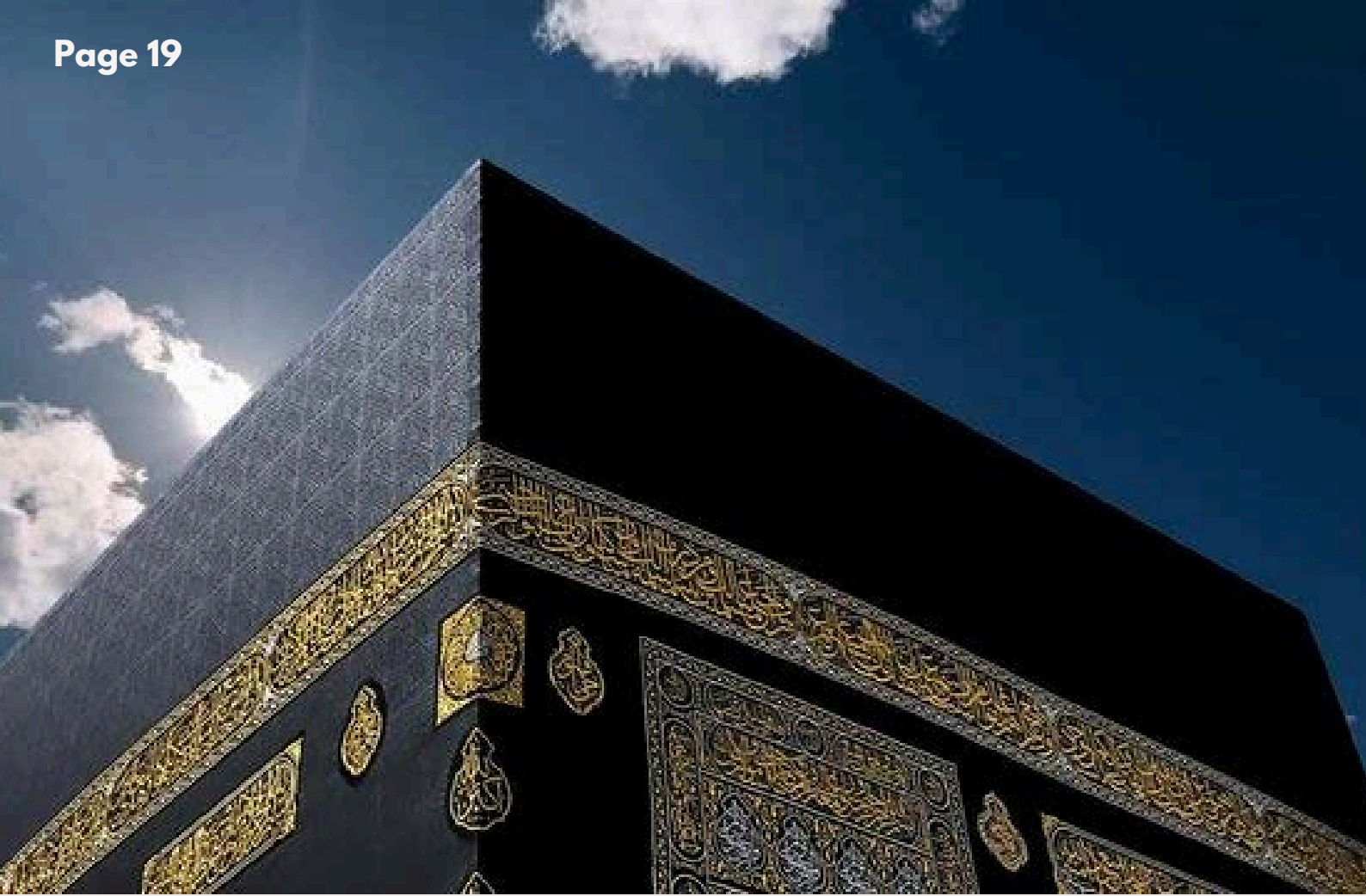
Origins of the battle can be traced to the 12th century, when the residents of Ivrea (Italy) burned down the palace of their duke after he attempted to attack the miller's young daughter on her wedding night. Visitors are welcome as long as they wear a berretto frigio (a symbolic red hat that makes you look like Papa Smurf). This is one of Italy's most unusual festivals. Held during carnival in mid-winter, the entire town of Ivrea near Turin turns into a battlefield where oranges are thrown in the streets, reenacting a legendary battle for freedom from oppression.

HOW IT IS CELEBRATED

The core celebration is based on a locally famous "Battle of the Oranges" that involves some thousands of townspeople, divided into nine combat teams, who throw oranges at each other with considerable violence during the traditional carnival days: Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. The Carnival takes place in February (occasionally in March): it ends on the night of Shrove Tuesday with a solemn funeral. Traditionally, at the end of the silent march that closes the Carnival the "General" says goodbye to everyone.

Duration

For three days every February, hardworking people gather into nine tribes, don helmets and body armour, and hurl fruit at one another with extreme aggression. For these three days, a festival known as 'The Battle Of The Oranges' engulfs the city.



THE BEAUTY OF EID

Eid al Fitr
and
Eid al Adha

By Lendy Sabur



Eid was established by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as a day of thanksgiving and celebration for Muslims. It is observed with special prayers at mosques, delicious meals, gifts, giving charity (zakat/sadaqah), and spending time with family and friends. The joyous atmosphere of Eid strengthens relationships between family, friends and brother and sisters alike in Islam, and reinforces the values of generosity, and gratitude in the community. This is due to the fact that, on this earth, there are many people who suffer so much, experiencing no warmth comfort or love from any source of life. The month of Ramadan allows those who are more fortunate to humble themselves by experiencing the life of a human who knows what it feels like to go to sleep on an empty stomach alongside their families. This is the beauty of Islam, to be humble and in grace for everything you have.

Eid is a significant Islamic festival celebrated by Muslims like myself worldwide, marking a time of joy, appreciation, humility, and community. There are two main Eids: Eid al-Fitr, which is celebrated at the end of Ramadan, and Eid al-Adha, which honours the faith, trust and sabr (patience) which Prophet Ibrahim had within himself towards Allah to sacrifice his son in obedience to Allah's command.





SAFETY

IN FORMULA 1

by Jeivan Chopra



On 29th November 2020, Romain Grosjean, driving for the Haas team, escaped what was close to being a fatal accident at the opening race of the Formula 1 season - the Bahrain Grand Prix. The French driver made contact with the AlphaTauri of Daniil Kvyat on the opening lap and collided with the track wall at close to 120mph. The car was immediately broken in half, with Grosjean being trapped in the flaming wreckage for 30 seconds. Three years later, Grosjean bravely explained his personal experience in the award-winning short film 'Romain Grosjean's Escape - Bahrain 2020'. He addressed how he "realised his left foot was wedged inside the chassis", but that he was "thankfully... able to free his foot" from his shoe (which remained in the car) and so able "to exit the car without any threatening damages."

Due to the severity of the crash, Romain Grosjean was transported to a local hospital and treated for burns on his hands and ankles. Additionally, the x-ray confirmed he had escaped without any fractures, but unfortunately the burns suffered on his hands caused his lifestyle to change. For example, Grosjean explained how he cannot be in the sun for too long otherwise his hands' skin will start to peel off and become damaged again.



As a result of the crash, the FIA (Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile) - the F1 governing body - made several changes to improve safety in the sport. For instance, active aerodynamics in the form of movable front and rear wings allow for safer racing. In addition, stronger car structures and tougher make serious accidents less likely. In today's world, F1 drivers race at tracks equipped with hospital-grade medical facilities, medical evacuation helicopters, circuits with sufficient run-off areas, marshalls trained in driver extraction and, finally, a dedicated medical team who travel to every race. These changes have been made to ensure the sport is a safe environment for the present and future Formula 1 drivers.

The problem is, Formula 1 racing involves cars travelling at speeds almost always in excess of 100mph. In fact, these cars regularly exceed 200mph when driving on straight track. At such speed, accidents are, sadly, inevitable. All the FIA can do is to try to minimise the risk and be prepared for the worst.

Halima Naseem and Hafsa Majeed on...

COOPER HILL'S CHEESE ROLLING FESTIVAL

The Cooper's Hill Cheese-Rolling and Wake is an annual event held on the Spring Bank Holiday at Cooper's Hill, at Brockworth near Gloucester, England. Participants race down the 200-yard (180m) long hill chasing a wheel of Double Gloucester cheese.



At the very top of Cooper's Hill, the master of Ceremonies will release a nine-pound wheel of Double Gloucester cheese which can take on speeds of over 70 miles an hour. The first runner to get to the bottom of the hill wins the contest and a whole lot of cheese.

The cheese rolling competition is by no means a safe competition with dozens of athletes injured every year. If you take part, be prepared to face steep hills, bruises and cuts. The competition is believed to be a 600-year-old tradition, originating from the early 1800s to celebrate the turn of winter and a fresh batch of crops.

TAIWAN LANTERN FESTIVAL

LOUDSPEAKER 'FESTIVALS' DECEMBER 2024



What happens and why?

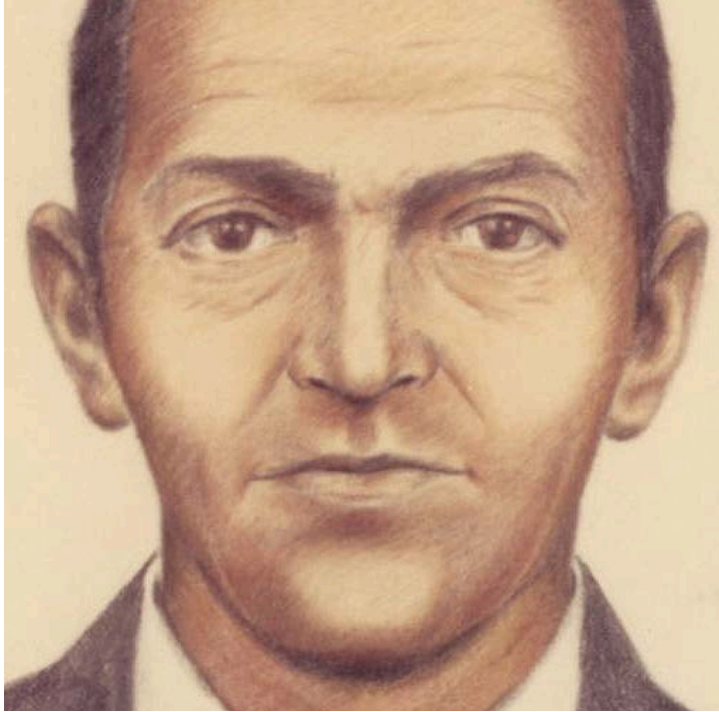
Taiwanese people write their wishes on the lanterns with a belief to bring an abundant crop for the harvest. These lanterns fly to the sky, bringing the people's wishes to the gods. They represent dreams for them to be blessed with luck and good things. The theme of the lanterns often corresponds with zodiac signs, and the lanterns themselves depict images such as historical figures, birds or the annual theme each year. Also, each lantern is over 10 metres tall! Since 1999, every main lantern has had its own theme music, lasting about 3 minutes in length and setting the rhythm for performances during the festival.

Celebrations, riddles and symbols

During the festival, houses are festooned with colourful lanterns, too – and these lanterns often have riddles written on them. If the riddle is answered correctly, the solver earns a small gift. Festival celebrations also include lion and dragon dances, parades, and fireworks. Both the lion and the dragon are symbols of power and good luck in Taiwan, and the dances are intended to bring happiness and good fortune to Taiwanese people.



THE MYSTERIOUS CASE OF DB COOPER



ISA ARIF tells the story of one of the most intriguing mysteries in American history

'DB Cooper' was the name used by an unidentified individual who, in 1971, boarded an aeroplane in the United States and later hijacked it - passing a stewardess a note claiming that he had a bomb and demanding a ransom of \$200,000. He later parachuted out of the plane, disappearing without a trace and leaving his whereabouts and identity unknown - although there have been many investigations carried out by the FBI.

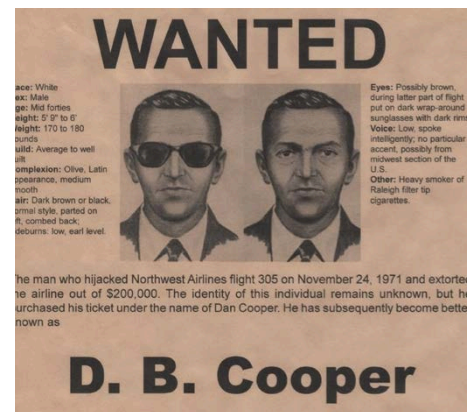
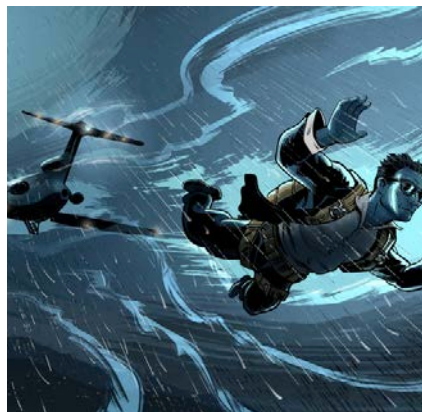


What happened on the flight?

'Cooper' used cash to buy a plane ticket on Flight 305, which was one-way to Seattle. Cooper appeared to be a quiet man in his mid-40s who wore a suit and tie as well as ordering a drink, bourbon and soda while waiting for the flight to take off.

A short time after 3pm he handed the flight attendant a note stating that he had a bomb. He then demanded \$200,000 in ransom and four parachutes. He also wanted a fuel truck standing ready in Seattle to refuel the plane so that he might fly off and land safely after the ransom had been delivered.

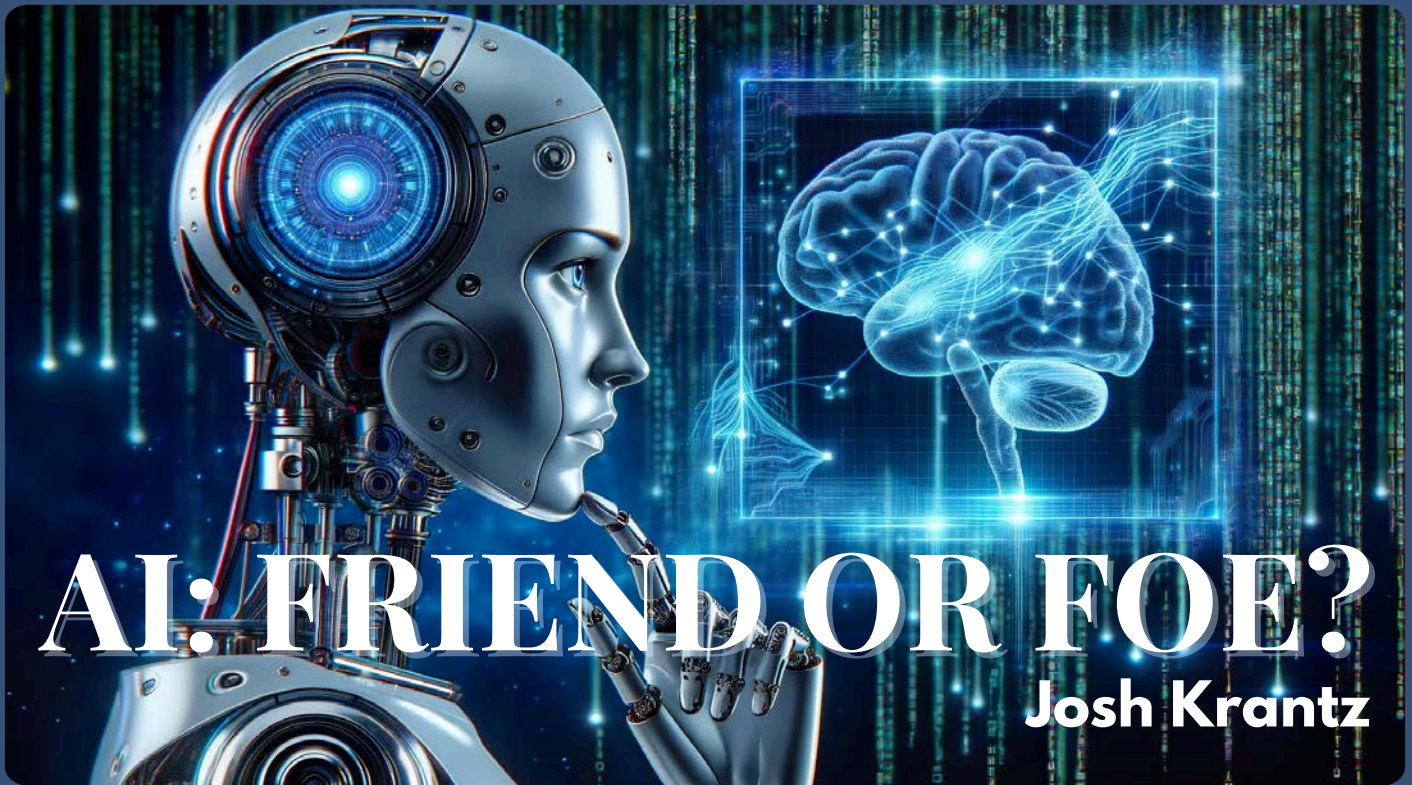
"It's not because I have a grudge against your airlines, it's just because I have a grudge."



After the plane landed he released most passengers but kept a few on board and instructed the pilots to fly to Mexico City at a low altitude and low speed. Cooper then proceeded to jump off into the night somewhere over the rugged terrain of the Pacific Northwest.

The case still remains a mystery to this day whilst leaving a fascinating legacy, as even the FBI has never been able to figure out his true identity. 'DB Cooper' has featured in many famous songs and TV shows such as 'Prison Break'.





AI: FRIEND OR FOE?

Josh Krantz

What is artificial intelligence?

Artificial intelligence (AI), in its broadest sense, is intelligence exhibited by machines, particularly computer systems. It is a field of research in computer science that develops and studies methods and software that enable machines to perceive their environment and use learning and intelligence to take actions that maximize their chances of achieving defined goals. Such machines may be called AIs.

Where is it primarily used?

Some high-profile applications of AI include advanced web search engines (e.g., Google Search); recommendation systems (used by YouTube, Amazon, and Netflix); interacting via human speech (e.g., Google Assistant, Siri, and Alexa); autonomous vehicles (e.g., Waymo); generative and creative tools (e.g., ChatGPT, and AI art); and superhuman play and analysis in strategy games (e.g., chess and Go). However, many AI applications are not perceived as 'AI': a lot of cutting-edge AI has filtered into general applications, often without being called AI because, once something becomes useful enough and common enough, it's not labeled 'AI' anymore.

Positives of artificial intelligence:

- Diminishes human error
- Facilitates faster decision-making
- Offers continual 24/7 availability
- Lessens risk
- Automates repetition
- Provides digital assistants
- Identifies patterns
- Identifies better human workflows



Negatives of artificial intelligence?

- Reduces employment
- Lacks creative ability
- Absence of emotional range
- Ethical dilemmas
- Increases potential for human laziness
- Privacy and data security concerns
- Lack of transparency and explainability
- Dependency and reliability

Artificial intelligence presents both transformative opportunities and significant challenges. Its benefits, such as enhancing efficiency, driving innovation, and solving complex problems, are counterbalanced by concerns over ethical misuse, job displacement, and bias. The balance between harnessing AI's potential and mitigating its risks will require thoughtful regulation, ethical development, and collaboration across industries and governments. By approaching AI with care, society can maximize its benefits while addressing its potential drawbacks.

REDHEAD FESTIVAL

The worldwide celebration of gingeriness

RAIYAT ASIF and
ARVANI SAINI tell us
more about this
unique festival



DID YOU KNOW...? FUN GINGER FACTS...



The redhead festival is a unique celebration that brings together people with red hair from around the world. Held annually in various locations, this vibrant event features activities such as contests, performances, and art displays, all highlighting the beauty and diversity of redheads.



It's a fun and inclusive atmosphere where participants can connect, celebrate their hair colour, and embrace their individuality. The festival not only fosters a sense of community among redheads but also raises awareness about the genetic rarity of red hair.



- **Ginger/red is the rarest hair colour in the world - it makes up less than 2% of the global population**
- **Redheads don't/can't 'go grey' - their strands of hair turn white or blonde**
- **Because red-hairedness and left-handedness are both recessive traits (which come in pairs), red-headed people are more likely to be left-handed**
- **In Ancient Rome, red-headed slaves were more expensive than those with different hair colour**

NIKI ASSIR

NOWRUZ

“Cheers to a fresh start and endless blessings!”

Niki tells us all about Persian New Year...

Nowruz - also known as Persian New Year - is an ancient festival which is celebrated by more than 300 million people in different regions with Persian roots, including Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kurdistan and others.

What is Nowruz?

Nowruz is a celebration from the Zoroastrianism religion, which dates back to 3,000 years ago and marks the end of an old year and the beginning of a new one of the Iranian calendar. It is celebrated on the day of the astronomical vernal equinox, which usually takes place on March 21. Representing renewal, rebirth and harmony with nature, the celebration involves family, community and the arrival of the new year.

How do people celebrate Nowruz?

The celebrations vary from country to country, but some common traditions are shared. Some include symbolic preparations with fire and water and ritual dances that sometimes involve jumping over fires. The flames symbolically purge the bad experiences from the previous year.





BORYEONG MUD FESTIVAL

DID YOU KNOW...?

The event actually started as a marketing ploy for local cosmetics companies, as it was initially created to promote Boryeong's mud-based products that are sold for cosmetics and skin care.



By Ayesha Azmat

The Boryeong Mud Festival is an annual festival which takes place in Boryeong, South Korea every year. The first such festival was staged in 1998 and, by 2007, the festival was already attracting 2.2 million visitors to Boryeong.



If you like to keep your clothes clean, you might want to avoid this festival, as getting dirty is an essential part of the fun. The action takes place in Boryeong, a small town in South Korea, about 80 miles south of Seoul. The muddy chaos happens on Daecheon beach.

A huge number of Koreans and overseas visitors head to the place to sling some mud. It is the largest summer festival in the world, regardless of nationality, race, language and age. It is an experience-type festival where everyone can enjoy together. The location is said to be surrounded by mudflats with mineral content said to be good for the skin. As always in Korea, there is an area for children to enjoy as well. This area isn't as muddy, but it has park rides for them to be entertained.