



IASLIC NEWSLETTER

Indian Association for Special Libraries and Information Centres

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Quote of the Month

"Libraries are more than just a storage place for books, they are treasure troves filled with creativity and knowledge. And that knowledge can be empowering."

— R L Hemlock,
American fiction writer

Appeal to Readers

News from different regions / states are solicited from IASLIC members for inclusion in the newsletter. Send such news to the Editor.

Email: chatterjeeamitabha@yahoo.co.in

An Appeal to Publishers of LIS Literature

Indian Library Science Abstracts (ILSA), being brought out by IASLIC since 1967, is the only national abstracting and indexing journal of India in the field of library and information Science. Due to the phenomenal growth of LIS literature in India in English as well as regional languages and the lack of volunteer professionals it has become a herculean task to collect, organize and compile data for the ILSA. The last cumulative volume (Vols. 40-44, 2006-2010) was published in 2018, the print copy as well as e-copies (in CD) of which are available for sale at IASLIC Office. The editorial team has now undertaken the task of compiling the next cumulative volume covering the period 2011 - 2015 and intends to publish the volume in early 2022. It will cover, besides periodical literature, papers published in conference/seminar volumes, festschrift volumes and other composite works. Due to pandemic situation the editorial team is facing problems in obtaining hard copies/soft copies of published materials in LIS. The team solicits cooperation from publishers, state library associations, organizers of the conferences/seminars/workshops, authors and individual library professionals and requests them to furnish hard copies/soft copies of LIS literature in English and regional languages published by them during the said period at the earliest, to enable it to complete the compilation work and publish the volume in time. The team hopes that with the effective support of the concerned people ILSA will become an authentic and comprehensive surrogate of Indian intellectual output in Library and Information Science.

IASLIC ACTIVITIES

IASLIC NEW MEMBERS

Institutional Members

1. Prabhu Jagatbandhu College, Andul-Mouri, West Bengal
2. Serampore College, Serampore, West Bengal

4th IASLIC - P C Shah Memorial Lecture

The 4th IASLIC P C Shah Memorial Lecture was held on December 6, 2021 at 5.30 pm through online mode. Shri S M Kulkarni, former Librarian, Anthropological Survey of India and former General Secretary, IASLIC, delivered the lecture on the topic "Random Thoughts in Librarianship". Prof Narendra Lahkar, President of IASLIC and former Professor, Department of Library and Information Science, Gauhati University, Guwahati, presided over the programme. Shri Abhijit Kumar, General Secretary, IASLIC, welcomed the speaker, chairperson and the participants who had joined the programme through GoogleMeet. He recalled how the annual IASLIC - P C Shah Memorial Lecture was started in the year 2018 out of an endowment fund created from a donation received from the family members of Late P C Shah, former Head, NICTAS (National Information Centre for Textile and Allied Subjects), Ahmadabad. Shri Kumar also introduced the speaker and the chairperson.

Shri Suryakanta Madhabdas Kulkarni, popularly known as S M Kulkarni, started his lecture by

IASLIC wishes all its members a very happy and prosperous New Year 2022

extending thanks to IASLIC President, General Secretary and EC members for providing him the opportunity to deliver the lecture named after late P C Shah. He then narrated in brief about his long association with IASLIC since 1958. In 1963 with his appointment as Librarian of Anthropological Survey of India at Kolkata (then Calcutta), he actively associated himself with IASLIC activities. Shri Kulkarni, in his lecture, expressed his views and shared some experiences gathered from his long service life. Referring to the current pandemic situation and his own experience at a Covid care centre, where a library helped the patients to overcome boredom and depression, he stressed that there should now be a new slogan 'A Library for Every Hospital'. He felt that this was the time to start bibliotherapy in every hospital and said that the library associations should convince the hospital authorities to do so. He said that a librarian should take up compilation work of newspaper clippings and indexing of periodical articles received in his or her library. A librarian should also carry out the task of compiling subject bibliographies, because bibliographies, indexing and abstracting journals were necessary reference tools to answer the queries and satisfy user needs, he stressed. A librarian must also be conversant with important dates as dates related with the occurrence of historical events, birthdays of renowned personalities helped a librarian to provide current awareness service with updated information, Shri Kulkarni added. In this context, he shared his experiences of collecting and compiling news events and news items during his editorship of IASLIC Newsletter for a long period of 25 years. Shri Kulkarni also mentioned some lacuna in librarianship profession. Now-a-days the status of librarianship profession had gone up and qualified librarians were available. But many posts of librarians in universities and other higher educational institutions were lying vacant for a long period, he lamented. IASLIC, ILA and other professional associations should give attention to this situation and try to convince the state governments as well as central government and different recruiting bodies to fill up the vacant posts urgently, Shri Kulkarni said.

After Shri Kulkarni's lecture, Prof. Lahkar, Chairperson, requested the participants to share individual thoughts, observations related to the lecture. Prof. Amitabha Chatterjee mentioned the need and utility of maintaining record of important dates. Prof. K P Majumder, Ms. Moumita Ash, Dr. Jaydev Das and a few others also expressed their views.

In his concluding remarks, Prof. Narendra Lahkar expressed thanks and gratitude to Shri S M Kulkarni for his lecture based on individual experiences of professional life. Finally, Ms. Banasree Ray, Joint Secretary, IASLIC proposed a vote of thanks. Around 60 professionals from different parts of the country attended the lecture programme. Ms. Monali Mitra Paladhi, Shri Sujan Saha and Shri Ujjwal Patra extended technical support in conducting the programme.

CONFERENCES / SEMINARS / WORKSHOPS

National

LIS Academy Conference

The 4th LISACON-2021 (LIS Academy Conference) will be held during January 6 - 8, 2022 at Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU), Belagavi, Karnataka. The theme of the conference is 'Open Scholarship and Libraries.' For details visit: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dNikHk8PDzGEacnsGtcNmfwZdlrDIRQ/view?usp=sharing>

MALIBNET Convention

KIIT Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, is going to organize 20th MANLIBNET Convention and International Conference on 'Libraries of the Future: Emerging Trends' during January 27 - 29, 2022. For details visit: [MANLIBNET%202022%20Brochure.pdf](#)

International

Conference on Agricultural Libraries

Rev B M Pugh Library, Assam Agricultural University Jorhat, in collaboration with Association of Agricultural Librarians and Documentalists (AALDI), is organizing an International Conference of Agricultural Librarians and User community (ICALUC 2022) during February 24 - 25, 2022. The theme of the conference is 'Innovation, Growth and Sustainability of Agricultural Libraries.' For details visit: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1p05AhvKkQr_bXeDq5Qi7D4RSeb2OTx0J/view

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Park Libraries in South Delhi

Giving an opportunity to morning walkers to spend some quality time in a lush green area while reading a book, South Delhi Municipal Corporation has implemented the concept of open libraries in neighbourhood parks with the help of NGOs, says a *The Times of India* report. The concept includes establishing a stall with a temporary roof wherein books will be kept in wooden/metal cabinets and people can get them issued for reading at this place only. One such library was inaugurated at Madhav Park in Rajouri Garden area recently and more will be set up. Standing Committee Chairman Col (Retd) B K Oberoi said that the initiative, Sahej, was aimed at helping people access newspapers, magazines and books at these open libraries, especially in the morning when they come for fresh air. "The idea will benefit senior citizens also, as they can enjoy reading books while soaking up the sun during winters. They can sit on benches and chairs to spend quality time," said the chairman. The facility will be open from 9 am to 5 pm. Deputy commissioner, SDMC (West Zone) Rahul Singh urged residents of the area to donate books for the open library. It has a collection of 350 books as of

now. “A guard and some other staff from the horticulture department have been deputed 24x7 in the park to ensure maintenance and safety of the library. This library has been set up with the help of NGO 'Star Foundation'. More such libraries will be opened in parks in the West Zone,” he said. For original report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/read-your-favourite-thriller-as-you-soak-up-the-sun-in-this-open-library/articleshowprint/86879326.cms>

Open Library in Mumbai

Book lovers, a special library, 'The Open Library Project,' is now a reality in Mumbai, and it is free to one, and all, says a story by Jayati available on *lbb.in* website. The Open Library Project has been started off by Mumbai entrepreneur, Satyajit Roy who will be running this library out of his office in Worli. The idea behind the library is simple, and rather utilitarian, in the next three months, the library will stock at least 500 books (mostly non-fiction) that can be borrowed by anyone completely free of cost. For Satyajit, the library will aim to stock books that will create a space for entrepreneurs to have access to genres that will inspire other entrepreneurs. Find autobiographies, success stories of companies/people, and people who're out there doing well in the start-up/business space. Though not limited to business or start-ups, the books included will be on varied topics like gardening, landscaping, surfing, and other unconventional fields that ought to be explored more. The library works in a simple manner, and has two rules: anyone can borrow one book at a time completely free of cost as long as they return it within the next 30 days. The second one being, write in at least two to three lines as to what you liked the best about the book. They are currently looking to crowd-source their library, and consider this as a call to action. They have taken out a list of 100 books, and anyone can reach out to them, and offer to donate a book from the list. They will be crowd-sourcing for another three months and will be releasing more lists with the book names they're looking for. Though people can walk into the library, and borrow whichever book they like, a website will be launched soon wherein you can check the availability of a specific book/or by the name of the author. Books can be delivered home too, with an additional charge. For full story visit: <https://lbb.in/mumbai/book-lovers-theres-a-new-8e3696/>

Roadside Library in Arunachal Town

“A word can change a mind, a sentence can change a life and a book can change the world”. The change from a dumping ground to a place of wisdom is an uncommon phenomenon, which over the months have been made possible by a vision followed by the support of the people mainly the youth. Book Exchange Centre or in simple words a roadside free library is now the talk of the town in Naharlagun, a town situated close to Itanagar, the capital city of Arunachal Pradesh, says a story on *newssense.in* website. The free library runs in a unique model of 'Give a Book, Get a Book'. Anyone interested can pick any book from the library in exchange of donating a book, where a few months ago existed an

illegal dumping ground. Located in Sector-D of Naharlagun, this unique initiative is the brainchild of Prakash Ghimiray, an enlightened social worker and entrepreneur based in Naharlagun. Prakash wanted to shift the illegal dumping place and replace that with something good for the society; so he came upon with this idea of having a book centre. His friends helped him develop the centre followed by the local youths, who now maintain the centre. Speaking to *News Sense*, Prakash Ghimiray said, “I am very happy that, I am successful in making people aware of healthy living habits, by developing the centre. Now not a single waste is dropped in the area, earlier marked as a dumping ground, though not legally.” Since its start in January 2021, many enlightened people have come forward and donated books. Now the library has around 900 books and the local youths and students are happy that they are able to read a number of books on variety of subjects. Prakash now wants to expand this unique initiative in other parts of the city and across the state. “Such library can't just inculcate the reading habits among the younger generation but also help them spend less time on screen, Prakash says. For original story visit: <https://newssense.in/2021/09/09/free-road-side-library-spreading-wisdom-in-arunachal-pradesh/>

Free Library at Aizwal

During the unprecedented times of COVID 19-induced lockdown, the Library & Documentation Sub-Committee of Ramhlun South Branch Young Mizo Association (YMA) in Aizawl undertook a commendable initiative for the book lovers. Titled “Kawtkai Library Version 1.0” (An open Library for book lovers), the project was established with an aim to let residents associate into reading, and overcome isolation and anxiety - which profoundly affected lives around the globe, says a story by Ezrela Dalidia Fanai available on *northeasttoday.in* website. The best part of this project was the doorstep delivery, which led readers to maintain COVID-19 restrictions, thereby attaining a healing treat to escape stress, and find role models in characters and develop empathy. With over 4300 books in their library, the project of Ramhlun South YMA gained momentum since it's functioning from April 18, 2020. The collection of books ranges from Mizo fiction and history, English fictions, their translations, and English autobiographies. They have also laid down a few rules for borrowing books - (1) From the list, a person can choose 3 to 5 books at a time which can be borrowed for 10 days; (2) Choose your book, author's name and your address and simply inform Library & Documentation Sub-Committee and it will be delivered to you; (3) After reading the books, one can just dial contact numbers of the committee, who will then pick-up the books from residences of concerned readers. A new library named Kawtkai Library Version 2.0 has been inaugurated recently. Meanwhile, this time readers have been urged to reach the space, and collect books of their choices. This decision has been made after the COVID-19 lockdown has been lifted by the

authorities. The Chairman of Library & Documentation Sub-Committee B Lalmalsawma informed that a book-shelf had been erected this year along localities, which delivered the concerned service free-of-cost. For original story visit: <https://www.northeasttoday.in/2021/11/25/mizoram-free-of-cost-library-set-up-in-aizawl-healing-treat-to-escape-anxiety-during-covid-19-lockdown/>

Smart Libraries in Punjab Schools Soon

Government schools in Ludhiana district will soon get smart libraries, equipped with tablets replete with e-content that will cover important aspects of their syllabus, says a story by Nikhil Sharma in *Hindustan Times*. The Education Department has selected 872 senior secondary schools in the state for the project, of which 67 are in Ludhiana. As many as 336 tablets will be installed in government school libraries in the district. The schools chosen for the project include Government Senior Secondary Schools (GSSSs) at PAU, Cemetery Road, Sekhewal, Basti Jodhewal, Mundian Kalan, Gill, Bharat Nagar Chowk, Miller Ganj (Dholewal), Dhandari Khurd, and Jagraon, along with GSSS Multipurpose and Shaheed-e-Azam Sukdev Thapar Schools. Each school will get five tablets, except GSSS, PAU, which will get six tablets from the department as per the list released by the office of the Director, Education Department (Senior Secondary), Punjab. District Education Officer (Secondary) Lakhvir Singh Samra said that these tablets would accelerate teaching, learning and reading processes in school libraries, and would help enhance the students' knowledge. Principal Davinder Singh Chhina said, "Not many students like to avail the benefit of libraries, but the tablets will make teaching and learning interesting and easy. The government school libraries will now become high-tech learning centres." For full story visit: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/chandigarh-news/ludhiana-now-govt-school-libraries-in-punjab-to-get-a-smart-avatar-101639259683987.html>

Library on Wheels in J & K

'Library on Wheels' - first of its kind in entire Jammu and Kashmir - was launched by Jammu Sanskriti School recently, says a *Daily Excelsior* report. The 'Library on Wheels' was flagged off by chief guest, Mohd Rafi, Director, Libraries and Research, J&K, in the presence of Chief Librarian SRS Library, Sabhyita Rani, as guest of honour and Principal-cum-Vice-chairperson, Rohini Aima, coordinators and faculty. This flamboyant library first halted at Arnia to promulgate the objective to reach out to every person who wants to read a book. "In times of social media and digital era 'Library on Wheels' is going to be a passion for readers to recreate the magic of the era when libraries were popular destinations to get fruitfully engaged." Initially the van will be stationed at selected rural area destinations like Arnia, RS Pura and the list will be put up on website, said Rohini Aima, adding that there was no membership fee, the school still preferred to err on the side of

caution. There is a refundable deposit that is to be paid by the users against the cost of the book. Payment can be done online or in cash. It is fully refundable once the book is returned. The library facility is open for students from any private/Government schools or general community members of the area. "We will allow people to bring their own sanitizer bottles and use it before touching the books," said Aima. For original report visit: <https://www.dailyexcelsior.com/library-on-wheels-flagged-off/>

Dehradun's First Children's Library

On the occasion of Children's Day last, a Dehradun-based literary group called "Booknerds" started what it claimed was the city's first dedicated children's library in Old Nehru Colony Dehradun, says a *The Times of India* report. The library has a collection for young readers and will be open every day from 10am to 7pm. During a two-hour-long inauguration recently, activities like comic strip designing, bookmark making and story-telling were organized. Neha Raj Bhatnagar, co-founder of Booknerds said that the library aimed to inculcate the habit of reading in children from a young age. "We have carefully curated reading material, books and novels for our young readers. We also provide personalized recommendations for all age groups and genres," Bhatnagar said. "We hope to organize events in the future like author interactions, storytelling sessions, etc. Our goal is to make reading a fun activity for as many kids as possible," she added. For original report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/dehradun/doon-gets-its-first-childrens-library/articleshow/87703878.cms>

e-Library in Prayagraj Govt. Schools

Over 10,000 children studying in around 46 government primary and upper primary schools in Bamrauli (Kaurihar) and Badokhar (Koroan) clusters of Prayagraj district are attending e-classes after the Education Department introduced smart classes to make learning fun for children. Besides smart classes, e-library (digital library) has also been set up at five upper primary schools in Badokhar cluster including Bhawanipur, Tudiya, Badokhar, Handia and Lovakon to keep children updated about happenings across the world, says a *The Times of India* report. Basic Shiksha Adhikari (Prayagraj) Pravin Kumar Tiwari told *TOI* that over 10,000 children studying in primary and upper primary schools in Bamrauli and Badokhar clusters were attending e-smart classes. "Digital installation has brought an incredible change in attendance in primary and upper primary schools in trans-Ganga and Yamuna areas," he said. In Bamrauli cluster, smart classes are being run at 17 primary and seven upper primary schools. Similarly, smart classes are also running in 17 primary and five upper primary school in Badokhar. The Government had allocated ₹ 70,000 and ₹ 1 lakh to each school for the purchase of smart TV and furniture while ₹ 2 lakh per school was also spent on five upper primary schools to run e-library. For full report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/allahabad/E-library-at-five>

upper primary schools to benefit students/ articleshowprint/827244901

Professor turns Home into Library

When the recent rain fury brought down a part of his over a century-old ancestral home, he did not think twice before deciding to convert the remaining portion of the building into a community centre, says a *The Times of India* report. Pravin Maripelly, a former artist from MS University and a yoga enthusiast, converted part of his ancestral house into a library and reading room for the people of his village back in his home state of Telangana. Maripelly, who is currently pursuing another post-graduate degree in fine arts in four-dimension from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, virtually inaugurated the library recently from the USA. "I was thinking about what I could do about the home. That is when I realized that there was no reading habit in the village, so why not turn the remaining structure into a library and reading room," said Maripelly. The back portion of the house, which had collapsed, was completely brought down and the front building was renovated. Its interiors were changed to make it suitable for a reading room. Maripelly also drew motivation from American artists Rick Lowe's Row Houses and Theaster Gates's The Dorchester social art projects "There are around 190 books right now and the number will keep on increasing," he said. In near future, Maripelly also plans to connect the library globally enabling online lectures, workshops and talks by people from across the world on different topics. While Maripelly is abroad, his cousins and a former teacher have volunteered to manage the library. For original report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/vadodara/msu-prof-turns-ancestral-home-into-library/articleshowprint/86737175.cms>

13,000 Digital Libraries coming up in Andhra

The State Government of Andhra Pradesh has started work to establish 12,979 digital libraries across the state, says a *The Times of India* report. The first phase will have 4,530 digital libraries, which would be completed by January 2022. These libraries will come up in three phases under the name YSR Digital Libraries. Chief minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, who reviewed the scheme of establishing digital libraries, asked officials to complete the construction of buildings for the digital libraries as per schedule. The officials told the chief minister that the work on the second phase of digital libraries too would be started shortly. The chief minister set the target for officials to complete the first phase of libraries by Ugadi 2022. He also told them to complete the second phase by December 2022 and the third phase by June 2023. The chief minister directed the officials to ensure that the latest technology was adopted in all these digital libraries using Internet facility. He asked the district collectors of Anantapur, Chittoor, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari to

pay special attention to the construction of digital libraries. He wanted them to ensure that these libraries were also used by employees who were working from home. They must also be helpful for the youth who wanted to prepare and appear for competitive examinations. For full report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/amaravati/work-kicks-off-on-13k-digital-libraries/articleshowprint/87385129.cms>

Library Shows Vision for Blind People

Prof. Prateek Ashwin Shah, a visually-impaired teacher at Sojitra College in Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat, so far used to rely on limited literature that was available in Braille language for his PhD studies. But now, Shah who is pursuing doctoral studies in the Department of Postgraduate Business Studies, has started using a special facility that helps him not only listen to books written in any language but also translate these using the Internet — all thanks to Bhaikaka Library of Sardar Patel University (SPU), Vallabh Vidyanagar. The special facility of a screen - Kibo - has been made available for the disabled students at the library, the largest facility in the education hub of Charotar region of Central Gujarat. "With the help of this screen scanner, a visually impaired student can listen to a book written in any language in the same language. In addition, since this scanner is connected to Google translate through Internet, it is also possible to translate the book into English, Hindi, Gujarati and Marathi so that the student can understand the book written in any language in his own language," said Shishir Mandaliya, the chief librarian. "There are limited documents or resources available in braille and it is too much costly to convert our regular books into braille. This Kibo scanner provides a better option to read all regular books and convert them into audio form," said Mandaliya. "We want more visually-impaired and disabled students of Anand and Kheda regions to take advantage of this facility," he said. The library which has been named after Bhaikaka, who had established SPU to cater to the educational needs of rural students, has a rich collection of 2.65 lakh books and reading material. More than 3,000 members register every year to avail its facilities. For original report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/vadodara/vv-nagar-library-shows-vision-for-blind-people/articleshowprint/84594941.cms>

Virtual mega book fair

A virtual mega book fair was organized recently for the students of Delhi government schools, says a *The Times of India* report. The schools under the Directorate of Education (DoE) are expected to use the platform to choose from the best books for their libraries. Students and teachers alike will be able to place orders for the books online from the publishers and these would be delivered to the schools. Deputy Chief Minister and Education Minister Manish Sisodia inaugurated

the fair via a video conference. “It is for the first time in the country that all schools of a state are participating in such a virtual book fair together. Books play an important role in the all-round development of children. Realising its importance, the Kejriwal Government has made many important changes in its school libraries in the last five years. Our aim is to provide quality books to the children studying in government schools,” Sisodia said. Suggestions were invited from teachers and students regarding the selection of books and only those were included in the libraries that would contribute to the positive development of kids, he said. “Now, a scrutiny committee decides whether the books by a publisher are good and useful for children and whether they are required in a library, and if they would help the students in pursuing their dreams. The committee decides whether the books are worth purchasing,” Sisodia stressed. This year, the scrutiny committee has prepared a list of 8,000 books from 220 publishers. The Delhi Government has allocated ₹ 9 crore for 1,031 schools in Delhi. For original report visit: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/virtual-mega-book-fair-for-delhi-govt-schools/articleshow/print/87704734.cms>

TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Instagram's Parental Control Features

Instagram will roll out new parental control features on its platform in March, the service's head Adam Mosseri has announced in a blog post. They'll allow parents and guardians to see how much time their teenagers spend on Instagram, set time limits, and get notified if their child reports someone. The controls were announced as a package of new features designed to make the platform a safer place, particularly for its teenage users, says a story available on www.theverge.com website. Although Mosseri's post says these safety features have been in the works for “a long time,” their announcement comes in the wake of a series of damaging revelations about the Meta-owned social network. Most notably, internal documents leaked by whistleblower Frances Haugen showed that Instagram was aware that its service could make body image issues worse for its female teenage users. Mosseri is due to testify in front of a Senate committee, where he will likely be asked about the impact of Instagram on its young users. Alongside the new parental controls, Instagram says that it is developing an educational hub for parents and guardians to offer them tips and tutorials about children's social media use. Other new safety features include changes to how Instagram handles tagging permissions for teenage users, which are due to roll out to everyone early next year. By default, Mosseri says, the service will no longer allow users to tag or mention teenage users. There's also a new bulk delete feature coming in January, which will let users remove their posts, likes, and comments en masse. Mosseri says that this is designed to help

users “manage their digital footprint.” Mosseri's post also goes into details about safety features that are in their earlier development stages. It confirms that the service is continuing to explore plans to “nudge” people away from topics they've been dwelling on for too long. When he announced this feature alongside Take a Break in October, Meta's vice president of global affairs Nick Clegg said it would kick in for “content which may not be conducive to [a user's] well being.” Instagram hasn't provided an indication for when the feature may be launched. The service is also exploring introduction of a stricter setting to control what content gets recommended to users in Explore, aimed at limiting their exposure to “potential harmful or sensitive content or accounts.” Although Instagram's post contains a number of quotes from experts and research partners writing in support of the new features, Mosseri will have his work cut out if he wants to win over increasingly critical lawmakers in the US. “Meta is attempting to shift attention from their mistakes by rolling out parental guides, use timers and content control features that consumers should have had all along,” Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), told *The New York Times*. “But my colleagues and I see right through what they are doing.” For original story visit: <https://www.theverge.com/2021/12/7/22821955/instagram-parental-controls-teenage-safety-features-take-a-break-nudge>

WhatsApp's New Privacy Measures

WhatsApp has added new privacy measures to its app recently so that you can chat without worrying about stalkers, says a story by Shubham Verma available on www.indiatoday.in website. The chat app already gives users the option to hide their last seen and online activities from everyone or from people who are not on the contact list. But you will be surprised to know that there are certain apps that can stalk your WhatsApp activities, and the new privacy measures prevent them. The information comes from WABetaInfo, which shared an email response from the WhatsApp customer support. The email confirms that the new privacy features are now effective for all WhatsApp contacts - including business accounts, “making it harder for people you don't know and haven't chatted with from seeing your last seen and online presence on WhatsApp.” Unlike many other WhatsApp features that can be turned on and off by users, these new privacy settings that affect who can see or cannot see a user's online status are supposed to work automatically. What this means is that WhatsApp will roll out the feature on the backend side of the app and that users, at least according to information available right now, will not have to do anything. Given that this is a backend change, it is also not clear when WhatsApp will fully roll it out. In a way, it is a little confusing for users at the moment. So don't go looking into WhatsApp settings to change anything at the moment. Essentially, there are several third-party apps that can keep track of a WhatsApp user's last seen and online activities. And this is despite the

“Nobody” privacy option being enabled. Not only do these apps track your activities, but they also log them for anyone who wants to keep surveillance on you. For stalkers like these, WhatsApp's new feature is a boon. Unless these third-party apps are not on your contact list or have an active chat with you, they will never be able to find out when you last saw messages or when you were online. The customer support's email, however, does not say anything about the “Everyone” privacy setting and whether turning it on will also hide the last seen and online status of a user. Anyway, the report also mentions that if you have chatted with an account but you still cannot see their last seen status, that is because they have enabled the “My Contacts Except” privacy setting, which is available to some beta users of WhatsApp for Android and WhatsApp for iOS. But for everyone else, the new privacy measures will not change anything. This means that your existing chats with contacts and businesses will not be affected. In another news, WhatsApp was recently spotted testing the waveform appearance for voice messages. The new look will go well with what the feature is intended for, and it will also allow users to figure out if they should listen to the message on a speaker or if they need earphones to listen to it. The feature is still in beta testing stage and will take some time before WhatsApp rolls it out for everyone. For original story visit: <https://www.indiatoday.in/technology/news/story/whatsapp-s-new-privacy-measures-stop-stalkers-from-seeing-your-last-seen-online-details-1887091-2021-12-13>

SPECIAL FEATURE

A Dream Comes True

If you have visited Mumbai, the business capital of India, in recent years and have not visited the library café called *Bombay to Barcelona* located in Andheri area, you have really missed the feel of warmth that it exudes and missed the opportunity to be a witness to the positive activities of this popular hang-out, where one can sip a cup of tea or coffee or relish some mouth-watering cuisine while enjoying a popular story book or a piece of inspirational literature from the café's library racks. *Bombay to Barcelona* is the fulfillment of one of the cherished dreams of Amin Sheikh - one time a street boy of this busy city - whose house front is now adorned with a list of his dreams on a white board — the dreams he has accomplished are written in green ink while the ones in red are those yet to be fulfilled.

The life of Amin, now around 40, who studied only up to 7th grade, has been full of struggle, but he was lucky to have some well wishers and patrons who helped him to win over his struggles and blossom into a writer of a fine autobiography, the income from which helped him to realize his dream of setting up this café-cum-library.

Amin started to work at a roadside tea stall at the tender age of 5, when other children of his age would only play and hum nursery rhymes or at best start preparation for entering school life in a comfortable atmosphere. Verbal and physical abuse was a routine at his workplace. He wanted to leave the job to avoid such abuse, but his mother would not allow him to do so as his earning ensured food on his table. Then one day “while playing with the kettle and tea glasses, Amin tripped and fell, causing the tea to spill and glasses to shatter. Fearing the consequences, Amin decided to run away. This would be the first of the many instances of 'running away' that were to follow in his adventurous life.” He could not return home in nearby slum as thrashing by his step father awaited there. So he started living on streets, but surviving on the streets was not free from misery either. He had to suffer abuses there too.

One day he found that his sister Sabina had also fled home to join him. Fortunately, Sister Serphine of Snehasadan, a non-governmental organization that provides a home and a future for homeless street children in the city, took them to the home which proved boon to him and changed the future course of his life. At Snehasadan Amin not only found a roof on his head but also clothes to wear and timely meals. He even started going to school again. On gaining adulthood, Amin left Snehasadan and started his own newspaper business and also did odd jobs to maintain himself. He also learnt driving during this period.

His life took another important turn when Father Placie of Snehasadan, who was a father figure to Amin, got him engaged as the driver of the adman Eustance Fernandez, who created 'Utterly Butterly Delicious' tagline for Amul. In 2002, Amin got an opportunity to accompany Fernandez on a visit to Barcelona as a Christmas gift. There he saw how the city was well organized, without poverty and street children and how people cared for the society. From then on he has been visiting the city every year and from there to some other parts of Europe too and making friendship with new people. Soon, his love for visiting new places and meeting new people translated into Sneha Travels, a travel agency he started while still working for Fernandes.

According to a story by Nimish Sawant available on firstpost.com website, “it was in Barcelona that Amin visited a lot of libraries and was impressed at how easy it was for the locals to access knowledge. Although he himself could not read much, the idea to do something around books to help street children in Mumbai had already started germinating in his mind. The idea took shape soon after the death of Eustace Fernandes in 2010. Amin was in a state of depression and started questioning what was the legacy he was going to leave behind. That's when he decided that he would build a library café to help out the many little Amin's still out there on the streets.”

But then how to get funds to fulfill his wish? He was in a

dilemma. According to Sawant, “Around this time, one of Amin's young friends — then eight-year-old Sahir D'Souza — who was fascinated by Amin's life story had also told him, “Amin *dada*, why don't you write your autobiography? I will help you with the writing.” Amin, at that time did not even know what the word autobiography meant. But he decided to start penning down his story.” And finally 'Bombay Mumbai: Life is Life, I am because of you' - Amin's autobiography was self-published in 2013.

In the words of Amin himself: “It took me 11 months to write it. I never knew nor grammar nor spellings, but my friends proved to be my most precious treasure and sincerely helped with the design, editing and promotion of the book. With the book in my hands, I stood on the streets to sell copies. This way, little by little word was spread about the library-café project and it was then when people from all over the world came to help me. As of today we have sold more than 20,000 copies all over the world. The book has been translated into nine languages: Spanish, Catalan, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, Marathi, Hindi and Hebrew. Thanks to the profits earned from the sale of the book, we have raised the necessary funds to make our project come to life: open our library-café that raises employment opportunities to youngsters who find themselves at the risk of social exclusion.”

The café, appropriately titled 'Bombay to Barcelona' in remembrance of his frequent visits to Barcelona, was inaugurated in August 2016, serves both *desi* and selected European cuisine. According to a post on <https://lbb.in> website, the café “doubles up as a library, with books from all around the world being donated to the café. We were touched

to know that every book in the library has a heartfelt note from the original owner, talking about why they've donated that particular book. It's safe to say our hearts melted long before we tasted a single morsel... But we ate a lot, anyway.”

According to Amin's 'I am Because of You' website, The café-cum-library functions with the help of “a team of employees and many volunteers who actively collaborate in cultural activities and attend to the street children who come by the café, offering them hot chocolate, some biscuits and playing with them as well. The purpose of the project is to help youngsters who are at a risk of social exclusion, helping them to learn a profession, supporting their studies and to find a home. The café has helped till date more than 40 youngsters at a risk of social exclusion to change their lives and prevent them from falling under marginalization, at the same time breaking the caste system inculcated in the mentality of the Indian society. The income of the café is used to pay their salaries, their accommodation, and medical expenses as well as to guarantee funds in order to make their dreams and aspirations come true.” The café also organizes events such as concerts, chats, activities and exhibitions to promote the culture and social relations.

It's a noble endeavour indeed! Amin should be profusely congratulated for the fine autograph penned by him and this noble project being funded from its income.

[Sources: <https://www.firstpost.com/living/bombay-to-barcelona-former-street-kid-amin-sheikhs-plan-to-help-others-2737486.html>, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/mumbai-news/runaway-boy-scripts-success-story-in-mumbai/story-VtghzAYf9ELwwLbT3aZmmL.html>, <https://lbb.in/mumbai/bombay-to-barcelona-library-caf-4d9b94/>, <https://en.iambecauseofyou.com/el-libro>]

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