



'Streaming services should invest more in...'

PG 4



DAY'S DIARY

Book published

Guinness Superlatives was incorporated in 1954 and the first book was bound on this day in 1955. The book became a bestseller in Britain

GUINNESS 'RECORD'

The Guinness Book of World Records has been translated into more than 40 languages, selling an average of 3.5 million books annually and 150 million plus books since its release



FIRST EDITION

Guinness planned to hand out free copies to 80,000 Irish & British pubs, but public demand turned the book into a bestseller. A million editions were sold by 1964



AGIST

The book is known for its lists and descriptions of records related to various extremes of size, speed, distance, and competitive challenges



BAPPA Moriya! The season has arrived when the country prepares to welcome the beloved Lord Ganesha. As the excitement builds and people seek out the most beautiful idols for the 10-day festival, a growing number in the city are also considering the environmental impact of these celebrations. This year, clay idols have become the preferred choice for many, reflecting a shift towards more eco-friendly practices. However, it's crucial to also be mindful of the colours/paints used to decorate these idols.

At Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University in Rajendranagar, efforts are underway to support this environmental consciousness. The university is preparing to sell eco-friendly Ganesha idols painted with natural dyes, which help preserve and protect the water bodies where the idols will be immersed after the festival.

During a tour of the university, Dr Lakshmi Pooja, an Assistant Professor from the Department of Apparel and Textiles and the Officer In-Charge of the Natural Dye Processing and Incubation Centre, explained the significance of using natural dyes on clay Ganesha idols. "Our main



As Ganesha Chaturthi approaches, many are turning to eco-friendly clay idols and natural dyes to celebrate the festival while protecting the environment, **TNIE**

lensman Vinay Madapu take us through the process

goal is the production of natural dye paint and this is the Natural Dye Processing and Incubation Centre. As we all

BAPPA GOES GREEN

know, synthetic colours contribute significantly to pollution, and every year, as Ganesha Chaturthi approaches, we hear about the environmental damage caused by the immersion of idols made from plaster of Paris and painted with synthetic colours. What people often

overlook is how these paints are produced and the health risks they pose to artisans who use them. Our objective in producing these natural colours is to safeguard our water bodies and human health while ensuring that our practices are environmentally friendly."



Discussing the sources of these natural colours and their application to the idols, Dr Pooja said, "We produce all our colours from natural sources, primarily plant-based materials. For example, we use annatto seeds, a traditional food colour for many years. These seeds are harvested annually and can be cultivated commercially. The orange colour is extracted by boiling the seeds in water. Similarly, we obtain yellow hues from marigold flowers, which are often discarded after festivals. These flowers can produce a beautiful range of yellow colours. Other natural materials, such as pomegranate, Eclipta, and flame of the forest, are also used to create a wide array of colours. The production process is simple: we extract the colours using water and convert them into paint by adding

gums and fillers. These paints can then be directly applied to the clay Ganesha idols."

On the versatility of these natural colours, she added, "Our natural dyes can be applied to a wide range of materials, including clay products, bamboo, cane, paper mache, and even plaster of Paris. While we primarily focus on clay idols, our technology is versatile, and our students are also learning to apply these techniques as part of their business education. Additionally, we produce Holi colours, which can be used in powder form or mixed with water for use in *pichkaris*. Our core technology centres around textile applications, and our paints have been tested by reputed laboratories, including pollution control labs. They are safe for the environment and skin, promoting the use of natural colours in various applications."

This initiative reflects a broader movement towards sustainability, ensuring that festivals like Ganesha Chaturthi can be celebrated with minimal harm to the environment.

VENNAPUSALA RAMYA

"Muthuswami Dikshitar's choice of words, the framing of subjects, and the information packed into his *kritis* is like sculpting a masterpiece from stone. This craftsmanship is what makes his compositions more celebrated than merely performed," said Madhusudhan Kalaichelvan during the 'Dhikshithar Kshetra Darshanam' presentation at Kalasagaram's Mid-year Music Series.

The four-day Mid-year Music Series commenced with a lecture by G Ravikiran and Madhusudhan Kalaichelvan on 'Dhikshithar Kshetra Darshanam'. The duo, who have extensively researched Muthuswami Dikshitar's *kritis*, described Dikshitar's life from his birthplace in Thiruvur, his visits to various *kshetras*, and presented some of his compositions inspired by these sacred places. Ravikiran began with the popular 'Vathapi Ganapathim Bhajeham', and Kalaichelvan's opening lecture highlighted Dikshitar's pioneering role and genius in composing Carnatic *kritis*.

Ravikiran rendered the *nottuswaras* 'Santhatham Pahimam Sangeetha Shyamale' in Shankarabharanam, followed by 'Sri Nathadi Guruguho Jayathi Jayathi' in Mayamalavagowla. He illustrated the well-structured composition with *kalpanaswaras* and continued with 'Nirajakshi Kamakshi' in Hindolam. He later explored *Anandahairavi ragam*, showcasing the beauty and use of Shudha Daivatha in 'Anandeswarena Samrakshithoham'. Ravikiran also sang 'Meenakshi Memudham' in Gamakakriya, and Kalaichelvan shared an emotional narrative about Dikshitar's final moments with 'Minalocani Pasamochani'. The duo was accompanied by Madanmohan on violin and Mannarkoil J Balaji on mridangam.

On the second day, Vasudha Ravi from Chennai performed a vocal concert with Dr KV Krishna on violin, P Jayab-



Divine recital



haskar on mridangam, and M Janardhan on *ghatam*. She began with a *Panthuvarali varnam* by Sadkaala Narasayya in two speeds and followed with Dikshitar's *kriti* in Gowrimanohari, 'Varalakshmi Namosthuthi', suitable for Varalakshmi Vratam. She then presented a *kriti* in *Kapinarayani* praising Chidambara Nataraja, and elaborated Lalitha *ragam*, performing 'Nannu Brovu Lalitha' in Misra Chapu, with *neraval* on 'Ninnu Vinna Gathi' and *kalpanaswaras*.

Vasudha continued with a *sloka* on Saneeswara and Dikshitar's *navagraha kriti* 'Dikshitar Tanujam' in Yadukula Kamboji. Following a fast-paced *kriti* by Saint Thyagaraja in Vijayashree, she rendered *Madhyamavathi ragam* and the famous 'Rama Katha Sutha', incorporating pentatonic shifts to *Shudha Saveri*, *Hindolam*, and *Mohanam*, which delighted the audience.

The third day featured a keyboard Carnatic concert presented by Satyanarayanan, accompanied by Dr DSR Murthy on mridangam and M Chan-

drakanth on *ghatam*. He began with 'Vinayaka Ninnu' in Hamsadhvani by TV Ramakrishna Bhagavathar and played the *Swarajathi* 'Amba Kamakshi' in *Bhairavi* with expressive *bhava*. Satya then performed 'Sri Venkata Girsam' in *Surati* by Dikshitar and 'Deva Deva Kalayamithe' in *Mayamalavagowla* by Swathi Thirunal. A brisk rendition of Saint Thyagaraja's 'Bantureethi Koluvu' with *kalpanaswaras* in the second speed thrilled the audience. Satya explored *Abheri ragam* for 'Nagumomu' by Saint Thyagaraja, with enjoyable *kalpanaswaras* and alternating percussionists.

On the final day, Mridula Ashwin began with a *Natakurinjipada varnam* by Papanasam Sivan. Mridula's brisk rendition of 'Parvathi Ninnu Ne' in *Kalkada* followed her Kiravani piece. The concert ended with a *mangalam* and a *thillana* in *Mishrasalapam* composed by her *guru*, Shri Neyveli Santhanagopalan. Accompanied by Dr DSR Murthy on mridangam, and SA Phani Bhushan on *ghatam*.

ART HUB

DARSHITA JAIN

IN the heart of Hyderabad's Banjara Hills, on a cozy rooftop on Road No 12, there's a special place called Artgram Cafe. It's not just a cafe; it's a spot where people can relax, enjoy good food, and let their creativity flow through art. This unique space was brought to life by Shwetha Somisetty and her sister-in-law, Hema Somisetty.

Shwetha, who moved from Bengaluru to Vijayawada after getting married, has a background in architecture and a deep love for mandala art. She always dreamed of a place where people could enjoy art in a peaceful, outdoor setting. "We always imagined an outdoor place where you can get lost in art, sipping coffee in a prime location," she shared. When they found this perfect rooftop space in Hyderabad, they knew it was the right place to bring their idea to life.

Hema, who has an MBA and is currently a homemaker, teamed up with Shwetha to create Artgram Cafe. Even though starting something new can be challenging, the response from the community has been better than they expected. "Response is above average, to be honest, as it is a brand new idea. Hope it will reach greater heights in the future," Shwetha said, full of hope.

What makes Artgram Cafe special is its wide range of art activities that everyone can enjoy, whether you're a child or an adult. From the detailed designs of mosaic arts and mandalas to the fun, messy spin art, there's something for everyone. "Artgram is for all age groups. We have something for everyone starting from 2+ years of age till veterans," Shwetha explained. The cafe isn't just about making art — it's about taking a break from the everyday hustle and finding peace in creativity. One customer said, "It is like meditation to do this art without any distractions."

Artgram Cafe is also a place where families can bond. Parents and kids work together on art projects, spending quality



Where creativity blooms over coffee



time away from screens and re-connecting through creativity. Shwetha believes that in our busy lives, these moments are precious. "People can destress from job tensions and get away from electronics and immerse in colours and strokes," she shared.

To get the word out about Artgram, they've been promoting it on social media, at exhibitions, and through pop-up stalls. While they don't heavily market themselves as promoters of Indian culture, they do include art that connects with Indian festivals and traditions. "Artgram definitely promotes art in a big way and culture in our own small way," Shwetha said.

Looking to the future, Shwetha and Hema have big dreams. They want to bring more art forms to Artgram and expand to other cities, so more people can experience the joy

of art. The combination of affordable art activities and the beautiful, nature-connected rooftop makes Artgram a favourite spot for many. "Our rooftop place has a lot of open space which makes it close to nature, which all the art lovers enjoy while doing the art," Shwetha said proudly.

Artgram Cafe is more than just a cafe — it's a peaceful retreat where creativity comes alive, families connect, and people find joy in making something beautiful. As they continue to grow, it's clear that Artgram is not just a place to eat or drink; it's an experience.