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UAE gives Instagram Reels mixed response

Nishitha Rachel

BENGALURU: Instagram Reels — the Facebook-owned photo-sharing app's short-video feature — is getting mixed responses in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where the feature was launched recently.

"It really doesn't faze me much as I always use TikTok. I use TikTok more than I use Instagram. I'm mostly on Twitter and TikTok anyway, so a new feature on Instagram, which is exactly like TikTok, doesn't seem interesting to me," said Patricia Paul, a student in the UAE. "The only plus point of Reels being available here is that I can watch all the Reels my friends post, the way they're meant to be viewed," she added.

"Prior to today, I was only able to see Reels as a normal Instagram post. It took me some time to realise I was watching a Reel. I checked it out and love it. I think I'm going to spend more time on Instagram, which I don't think I'm too happy about," said Nada Chashmi, a User Data Specialist in the UAE.

"TikTok will still dominate as the algorithm gives people instant clout. If Instagram does the same, people may favour it," said Aidos Nurekesh, a SOC Analyst in the UAE.

'Attend offline classes with open mind'

Sudarshani

BENGALURU: With students returning to campus for studies, here's what experts have to say about how they can cope with this transition from online to offline classes.

"Of course there will be a lot of changes. First of all, it must have been tough for students to adjust to online classes. And offline classes amidst the pandemic will face challenges like wearing masks and maintaining social distancing," said Dr Shanthi Satish, founder of the city-based R'eussir Trust.

"It's good to have offline classes, as there is learning happening when students practise standard operating procedures (SOPs)," she said.



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She also spoke about how students can cope with these challenges. "They should be totally aware of themselves, and not get too excited when

they meet their friends. They should go to college with an open mind and not cluttered thoughts about the pandemic. It is difficult to wear masks

and sit in class. So, they will have to exercise and keep themselves fit," she said. "Students should also eat hygienic food and try to

focus on their health. This will help them be mentally stronger and think in a more positive manner," she said.

"Classes on campus are a new challenge not only for students but for everyone around them. If students go to college with a positive and open mind I am sure things will fall into their places," she added.

Dr Madhurini Vallikad, a counsellor at St Joseph's College (Autonomous), said, "So far no student has approached me regarding this matter. Most of them are desperate to return to college, and many find excuses to visit the college. I have a son who is learning online now, but I expect that he will have difficulties when he returns to offline classes."

India gives vaccines to 69 countries

Athul Krishna

India has exported 5.8 crore doses of Covid-19 vaccines so far to the world, Minister of State (Health and Family Welfare) Ashwini Kumar Choubey said in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday, March 16.

Vaccines for it have been developed in countries across the world, but India has turned out to be the biggest manufacturer.

This has resulted in it resorting to what is being



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referred to as "vaccine diplomacy." India has provided vaccines to 69

countries so far, said Choubey on Tuesday. According to the numbers

he gave, the continent of Africa has benefited the most from India's vaccine exports, having received 2.3 crore doses, followed by Asia with 2.1 crore doses.

Individually, the countries that have received the most doses are Bangladesh (90 lakh), Morocco (70 lakh), the UK (50 lakh), Brazil (40 lakh), and Nigeria (39 lakh).

More than a year into the Covid-19 pandemic, the novel coronavirus has infected more than 120 million people, killing around 2.66 million of them.

St Patrick's Day revelry loses sheen in city

Megha Bhattacharjee

BENGALURU: Most pubs and eateries in Bengaluru do not have their usual St Patrick's Day celebrations lined up this year as a result of restrictions relating to Covid-19.

Pubs and eateries in Bengaluru, such as The Irish House, Hard Rock Cafe, and the Olive Bar and Kitchen, were known to commemorate St Patrick's Day — celebrated on March 17 — with Irish dishes and drinks for a full week leading up to the date. However, since the pandemic began, most restaurants and bars have ceased to provide these offers.

An exception is The Irish House, Sarjapur, where the usual St Patrick's Day celebrations are expected. Manager Satyam Kumar said, "There will be games and quizzes accompanied by classic Irish dishes and drinks on St Patrick's Day. Our customers have nothing to worry about as social distancing protocols will be maintained throughout the day. We have a strong customer base for this day so we are very hopeful."

Beatboxers share throat health tips

Alwin Benjamin Soji

BENGALURU: Beatboxers have to take proper care of their throat and mouth to make sure they perform well as even the slightest negligence could damage their vocal cords.

Professional beatboxers told The Beacon how they make sure to keep their vocal cords in optimal health.

Ham John, a student of Sindhi College, Bengaluru, and a beatboxer, said: "Drinking a lot of water is a necessity. Before performing, I avoid eating anything spicy. Most beatboxers also steer clear of smoking as it dries



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up the mouth. Special care needs to be taken during Winters to avoid catching a cough or cold. I make sure to drink a lot of hot water to keep my mouth wet and my throat infection-free."

Joel Mathew, a beatboxer from Delhi, said: "I make sure that I drink a lot of water. The lips should always be wet to beatbox. Apart from that, I don't follow anything. This routine is the same for me every time I beatbox. Drinking hot water during winters, however, is a must."

Elizabeth Reji, the current beatboxer of Echo, the Western Music Society of Jesus and Mary College, Delhi, said: "I don't have a routine as such for beatboxing. I just make sure that I drink a lot of water. I don't really do anything else."

Irate teachers threaten to shutter pvt schools

Pavithra Prabhu

BENGALURU: Private schools nationwide may shut down as various teachers' and private school management associations received no response from the Central and state governments to the educators' protest in the city on February 23 against the 30 percent fee cut in private schools. This, despite assurances from Karnataka Primary and Secondary Education Minister S Suresh Kumar.

"The Central government has announced a Rs 20 lakh

crore package which includes all the sectors except for private schools," said Private Schools and Children Welfare Association president Syed Shamael Ahmad, referring to the economic package the prime minister announced last year.

"If private schools are not included in the package, we will be forced to shut down private schools because we do not have funds to run the school. Parents are not paying fees. We don't have money to give salary to teachers and support staff," he added.