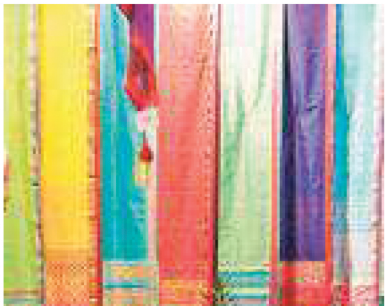


Satire returns

'Le Cultural Theatre', an Ottamthullal performance will be held. Packed with wit, and satire, the show will be an experience.  
@ LE MERIDIEN, MARADU  
On November 23, 6.30 pm  
☎ 9895765641



Cotton and more

Istaa and Village Shop jointly organises an exhibition and sale of saris, dress materials and home linen.  
@ SAMBAR HALL, BTH  
On November 22  
☎ 9847301650



Christmas shopping

It's the time to shop. 'Utsav 2019', a exhibition of designer wear will be held.  
@ THE CENTER HOTEL, PANAMPILLY NAGAR  
On November 23, 10 am  
☎ 0484 414 1222



Mural hues

'Niracharthu', an exhibition of mural paintings of the alumni of Aranmula Vastuvidya Gurukulam.  
@ DURBAR HALL ART GALLERY  
On till November 24  
☎ 0484 236 7748



Kalari calls

For those interested in learning Kerala's martial art, kalari, a one-day camp will be conducted.  
@ SATYA, CIAL JUNCTION, ATHANI  
On November 24, 7.30 am to 9 am  
☎ 8086322225



Notes to remember

A carnatic vocal concert by Kalyani Ramani will be organised by Beame in association with Ernakulam Karayogam.  
@ TDM HALL  
On November 22, 6.30 pm  
☎ 94464 55584



Princess diaries

:: PRIYADERSHINI S

"When a woman is educated, she is empowered. Nothing can put her down. A platform that would give women the power to fly high and break the so-called glass ceiling has always remained a dream. I ran the idea of starting something to that effect among my friends and everyone responded positively. That's how My Princess Foundation came about," says New York-based cardiologist Nisha Pillai, the brain behind the organisation that is reaching out to young girls from disadvantaged backgrounds in Kerala.

Ten months since its formation, the Foundation has a network of mentors and sponsors, a total of 500 people including young female students. Its first scholarship distribution event was held recently at the IMA House in the city.

Nisha Ambady one of the nine founders (all of who are in USA), and who runs a school for under-

A group of Malayali women living in America is reaching out to the young girls of the State with their mentorship programme

privileged children in Phoenix, Arizona, says that the idea to do something meaningful for women back home started with the Sabarimala issue, which brought the vulnerability of women centre-stage. Nisha is the international co-ordinator of the foundation.

"Our idea of charity is one woman educating two others. Imagine the domino effect and the im-

pact this will have in our society," Nisha Pillai says.

The founders charted a programme where undergraduate girls can apply for sponsorship and once selected through a stringent process, would be placed under a mentor, who would assist her with career counselling, emotional help and financial assistance, provided by a sponsor.

"Even more than financial aid, these kids need mentoring. Not in education alone, but also social, spiritual, career guidance or emotional support," says Nisha Ambady. The foundation, after a thorough search, has selected 50 mentors who are professionals from different fields such as banking, teaching and medicine. They form the link between the spon-



sors and the young women. Adequate financial support is allotted to each candidate every year to pursue higher studies.

"Career counselling is important as these girls are not aware of the myriad options available to them, instead of pursuing the conservative medical or engineering fields, which may not be suitable for them. The mentors can help them with their choices, guide and encourage them to excel in their field of creativity, like dance, tailoring, and many vocational options that would educate and put them to work in a shorter period of time," says Nisha Pillai. "We are also encouraging them to look at small business options and trying to find assistance through various governmental agencies for the same".

Selection of the mentors has been a "beautiful process", says Nisha. They have dedicated their time and energy to the empowerment and upliftment of these of young women. "Reaching out to the young women of our State from a distant land and being able to help them become future role models is a dream come true," says Nisha Ambady voicing the team's common feeling and adding, "We would like more women to join the work of My Princess Foundation as sponsors and mentors." My Princess Foundation can be reached at myrajaputri@gmail.com

**Help at hand** Below, members of the My Princess Foundation at the scholarship distribution in Kochi



Sufis and saxophone

Rajasthani folk band Swaarag says since we celebrate everything, musicians like them can thrive



**In tune** The members of the folk fusion band, Swaarag, below, during a performance  
\* SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

:: GEORGE M SONI

A Sufi poem hitches a ride on a saxophone, taking along with it the beats of a tabla and a drum, the rhythm of a khartal and morchang (Rajasthani instruments) and finally surrounds itself with the soothing vibrations from a traditional sitar and an acoustic guitar. Sounds from the Eastern and Western hemispheres, blend together to create the trademark music stamp of Swaarag, a Rajasthani folk fusion and Sufi fusion band. The band was runner-up in the musical reality show, Rising Star 3.

Swaarag, founded by Pratap Singh Nirwan and Arif Khan in 2014 at Jaipur, has conducted over a thousand performances across the country including concerts, corporate events, weddings and college festivals. "When we started, one of my business acquaintances told me there is a season for everything, be it corporate events or weddings and I used to think so too," says Pratap. They were in the city to play at a wedding.

He says, "But good music is always in season." He attributes this influx of opportunities to the way "Indians celebrate everything", from a child's first birthday or a daughter's wedding to a grandparent's 80th birthday. He remembers how a senior couple thanked the band at a wedding for making them dance after 15 long years.

The band performs Rajasthani folk fusion, Sufi fusion and instrumental fusion. They also play fast Bollywood dance numbers if the audience requests. "Playing in



different parts of the county, from Himachal Pradesh to Goa, not everybody in the audience understands the lyrics but they always groove to it's beat and rhythm." He says that each part of the country has its unique style of music and that Swaarag aims to take the spirit of Rajasthani folk music and Sufi fusion to all corners of the country. They fit comfortably in the gap left by Western and classical styles and perform their unique blend of music by fusing together these different modes of musical expression on stage.

The band consists of seven members - singer Asif Khan, Arif Khan the sitar player, drummer Sajid Khan, Tasruf Ali on the saxophone, tabla by Seif Ali Khan, Rey Rozerr plays the acoustic guitar and the Rajasthani instruments khartal and morchang are played by Arif Khan (the band has two Arif Khans).

Ride to Munnar

Pedal Force will organise a 'Save Planet' ride to the hill station



As part of its third anniversary, Pedal Force, a group of city-based cycling enthusiasts will organise a ride to Munnar.

The ride has been titled 'Save Planet'. Formed with an aim of promoting cycling as an alternative mode of travel, the members of the group believe that

cycling instead of taking the car of the bike would help in conserving fuel and reducing the stress on the environment. It is also lighter on the pocket.

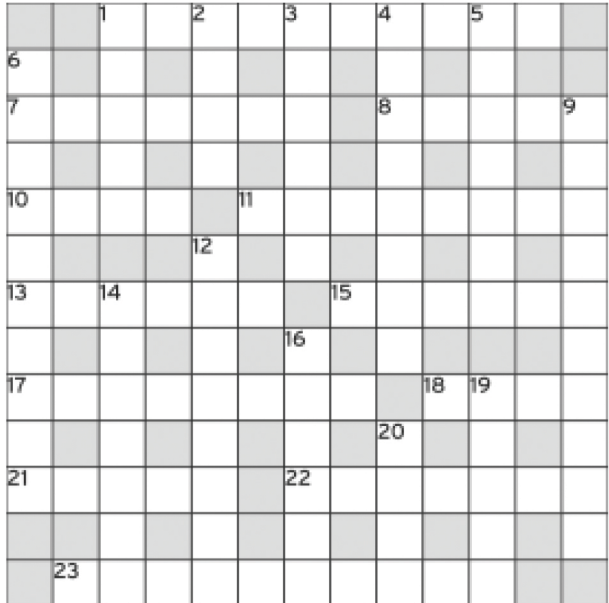
The ride, which will be held on December 14, will start from Tripunithura.

The ride is being held in association with Ripple Tea Munnar, Petroleum Conservation and Research Association, Leaf Resort Munnar and Munanr Destination Makers.

In two days, the riders expect to cover 250 km, says Joby Raju, founder of Pedal Force. Men and women over 18 years of age can participate. Out of the entries received only 20 applicants will be selected for the ride. For registration, log on to [www.pedalforce.org](http://www.pedalforce.org)

For information, call 93884 81028

THE GUARDIAN QUICK CROSSWORD

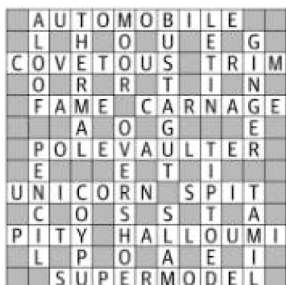


Across

- 1 Source of family shame (5,5)
- 7 Paradigm (7)
- 8 Summarise (briefly) (5)
- 10 US geezer (4)
- 11 Ball of dough (8)
- 13 Metal-stringed soundbox (6)
- 15 Cask stopper (6)
- 17 Culinary liquid (5,3)

Down

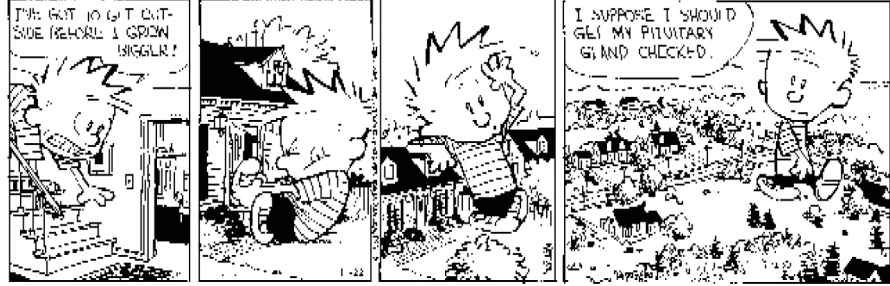
- 1 Mark with a hot iron (5)
- 2 European mountain range (4)
- 3 Don't lag behind! (4,2)
- 4 Lively jig (8)
- 5 Deep print (7)



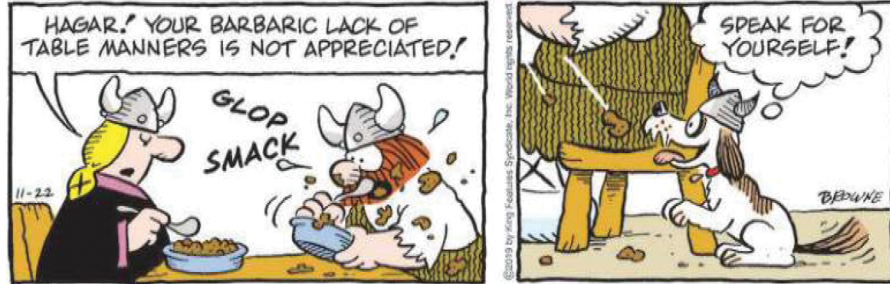
- 6 Appointment (10)
- 9 Book one can't put down (4-6)
- 12 Statue's base (8)
- 14 Three in one (7)
- 16 Carnival (6)
- 19 Machine tool for shaping metal or wood (5)
- 20 Lover (4)

Solution will appear in MetroPlus dated November 23, 2019.  
Solution to the puzzle that appeared on November 21

CALVIN AND HOBBS



HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



TIGER

