

# OPUS

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JOURNAL

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TAMIL NADU **SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION** DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION



**OFFBEAT**

## CAUGHT IN THE ACT

CUTN's Department of Hindi, as part of its Hindi Fortnight Celebrations, conducted a Drama Contest on Tuesday (Sept 20). Student teams from the sundry departments of the varsity had 10 minutes each to show off their creative selves, enacting plays of their choice. Apart from the drama contest, the department also organised several other competitions such as Creative Writing, Creative Advertisement, Solo Singing and Dumb Charade.

## STUDENTS, IT'S OK TO COPY!

Whether it is right or wrong is a different discussion altogether, but your right to copy, we mean photocopy, has just been upheld.

In 2012, a group of publishers petitioned the Delhi High Court, wanting to stop the Rameshwari Photocopy Services (based in the Delhi School of Economics) and the Delhi University from making photocopied "course packs" of books and excerpts prescribed in the university's syllabus.

Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press and Taylor & Francis were among those leading publishers. Their petition was aimed at protecting the authors' and publishers' economic and creative rights. But soon after the petition, the university students formed the Association of Students for Equitable Access to Knowledge (ASEAK) to mount a legal and ideological defence of the photocopy shop and their right to access knowledge. After that, a huge lot of academics whose works were also on the reading lists of the Delhi University syllabi wrote to the publishers asking them to withdraw the case and expressed solidarity with the students.

Ruling that copyright is not absolute and nor should it be, the Delhi High Court has this week ruled against five prominent academic publishing houses and in favour of the students and institution. We have just won an important battle. Now, you can photocopy your course book for educational purposes without a second thought.

— Team OPUS

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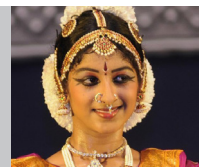
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OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATION, CUTN**



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## RIP: VCR!

Our good-old VCR is officially dead now. Shwetha Pramod rewinds its history to tell how once it was part of daily life and changed it for the better

**F**orsaken but not forgotten! Though most of us have moved to the ultra-chic pen-drives after compact disks that replaced the good-old VCRs (Video Cassette Recorders), for most of those who were part of the past century, it was more than mere plastic casing covering recorded tape. It was which—for the first time—brought video content to the households and thereby changed life as we knew it!

And, in the last week of July, it was officially declared dead as the production of VCR ended. Those who grew up with it might have skipped a heartbeat, for it helped to archive all those sweet memories of their childhood, family and festivity. As the VCRs gained popularity in the 1970s, it revolutionized entertainment and changed the way people watched movies. Cinemas knocked at their doorstep. Soap-operas came home if people missed the television telecast. The legacy of binge-watch what we follow now to watch series and sitcoms, is nothing new for the first digital natives of twentieth century, thanks to VHS tapes and VCR players.

People mourn at the death of this beloved friend which became an outdated technology after CDs and DVDs and

streaming started satisfying their needs easily. “Nostalgia...My Father used to record the movies we missed, with the help of VCRs so that we can enjoy watching it in weekends. I never realized that what he was doing back then will have a greater importance in future, especially in the wake of its last production” says Rekha Pillai, a Bank Officer who treasures her VCR like a souvenir from the past.

The kids born in the last decade of the millennium would call VCR as their first ‘technology love’, a bond we have for smartphones, laptops and computers nowadays because it introduced them to the magic of Disney movies and wonders of cartoons. A youngster responded to the news as shocking and is worried about the VHS tapes he has. “How will I buy a new VCR if the one I have now breaks down?” he asked.

The cassettes of movies that did not perform well in the theatres were available for rent and that’s how VCR hooked to the hearts of millions. But it does not possess any advantage over the new technology. Ever since DVDs conquered home entertainment, VCR was eventually dying. The cherishing moments it captured would stay forever, rest in peace VCR. — Shwetha Pramod



**EXPERTS SAY WE WILL INDIRECTLY GAIN FROM IT**

## GST TAX REFORM: WHAT IT MEANS TO US?

A path-breaking reform that could perhaps simplify the cluttered Indian tax system, Goods and Service Tax (GST) will come into effect in April 2017. Before that, Kiran N gives a heads-up about what it means to the students fraternity.

In a nutshell, the new tax reform will not have a direct impact on the education sector. But it will offer some benefits to the students by chopping down the levies on educational products.

GST is intended to integrate the whole economy and create a common national market. It will make the regime of multiple taxes on goods and services a thing of the past. It will convert the current production-based taxation system to a consumption-based one. Apart from creating a single market, the GST will introduce a digitised tax system and increase the efficiency of administration. The dual GST model will subsume most of the indirect taxes of the Union and state governments that include excise duty, service tax, value added tax

(VAT), additional excise duty, Octroi, entry tax, purchase tax, and taxes on lottery, betting and gambling.

With various tax exemptions and benefits, the education sector, currently, holds a good position in the country's tax system. Private educational institutions and deemed universities are registered as non-profit organisations and are either not taxed or covered in the negative list. Existing situation is likely to continue in the GST regime as well. Due to deduction in taxes, prices of educational items such as books will come down. After its implementation, local reforms in educational sector can be expected.

According to Dr. Prashant Kumar Panda, Associate Professor of Economics, Central University of Tamil Nadu, "The comprehensive unified tax will help the country to enhance the production and propel GDP growth. It will not impact the education sector much though. GST may reduce commodity prices but may slightly hike loan rates."

Dr. N. Rajagopal, Associate Professor

of Economics, Central University of Tamil Nadu, said: "Destination tax proposed by the GST will help consumers such as Kerala rather than producers. But every state will benefit from the centralised pool. As there is no service tax for the educational sector, GST will not have a direct impact. Presently, everything lies with the GST council."

A decision-making body, the GST council will be set up. It will be chaired by the Union Finance Minister and have representatives from state governments and union territories.

Amid such expectations, there are also apprehensions about the Bill. A uniform GST rate of 12 percent was mooted in 2003 but now the proposal has been hiked to 18. Lack of clarity on this point is a big hurdle. The constantly staggering indirect tax now lies above 15 percent. And, the addition of Swachh Bharat cess and Krishi Kalyan cess or the frequently-increasing excise duty of petroleum products are some of the examples of regressive indirect tax that demands the adoption of less rate cap. — Kiran N



## QUEEN OF ARTS

If a man has multiple talents, you may call him the jack of all trades. What if it's a woman? Well, you may call Srinidhi V, a trained classical dancer and an Economics student of our very own varsity, the queen of arts, for she is trained and talented in sundry performing art forms. In fact, this Chennai girl is a disciple of renowned classical dancer and choreographer Dr. Padma Subramanyam. "I have been taking dance lessons since Class 2. Dance is my passion. I have been a regular performer in various stage shows," Srinidhi dwells on her mission. She even had a privilege to perform in South Africa and showcase her talents in Mumbai along with her teacher. "I do Kathak, Bharathanattam, Kuchipudi and various other Classical dance forms, but nothing else satisfy me as Mohiniyattam does."

Apart from dance, she plays violin as well. "My friends are supportive and I'm blessed with a family that takes care for my passion, especially my mom always stands beside me."

- SHARATH KRISHNA, ALEENA JOSEPH

## IMPROVE YOUR LIFE SKILLS

Students, here's a chance to hone your life skills. CUTN's Department of Education, in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development and National Council of Rural Institutes, is organising an orientation programme on 'Motivation of Youth for Inspiring Rural Reconstruction' on September 27, 2016. The event will be inaugurated by CUTN Vice-Chancellor Dr AP Dash at 9.30 am.

