



LANGUAGES OF  
THE WORLD

Read more...

# MACVISTA

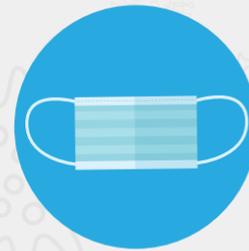
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*Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going.*

— Rita Mae Brown



## Global COVID-19 Pandemic

**Hi!** Hope you, your family and friends are all safe and healthy. COVID-19 has definitely taken up a lot of space and time in this year. And as we continue to deal with it, remember to follow guidelines being issued by the authorities. And above everything else, remember to stay healthy in body and in mind.

## Be **KIND** to address stigma during #coronavirus



Share the latest facts & avoid hyperbole



Show solidarity with affected people



Tell the stories of people who have experienced the virus

Learn more to Be **READY** for #COVID19:  
[www.who.int/COVID-19](http://www.who.int/COVID-19)



UNITED NATIONS



World Health  
Organization

For regular updates, visit the [WHO website](http://www.who.int).

*Even in the face of this virus, we will continue to live our normal lives. And in that spirit, presenting the MACVISTA newsletter with **Languages of the World** as the theme. Start your reading experience now.*

Wie gehts?

Ada apa?

Among meron?

ça va?



# LANGUAGES

# LOST



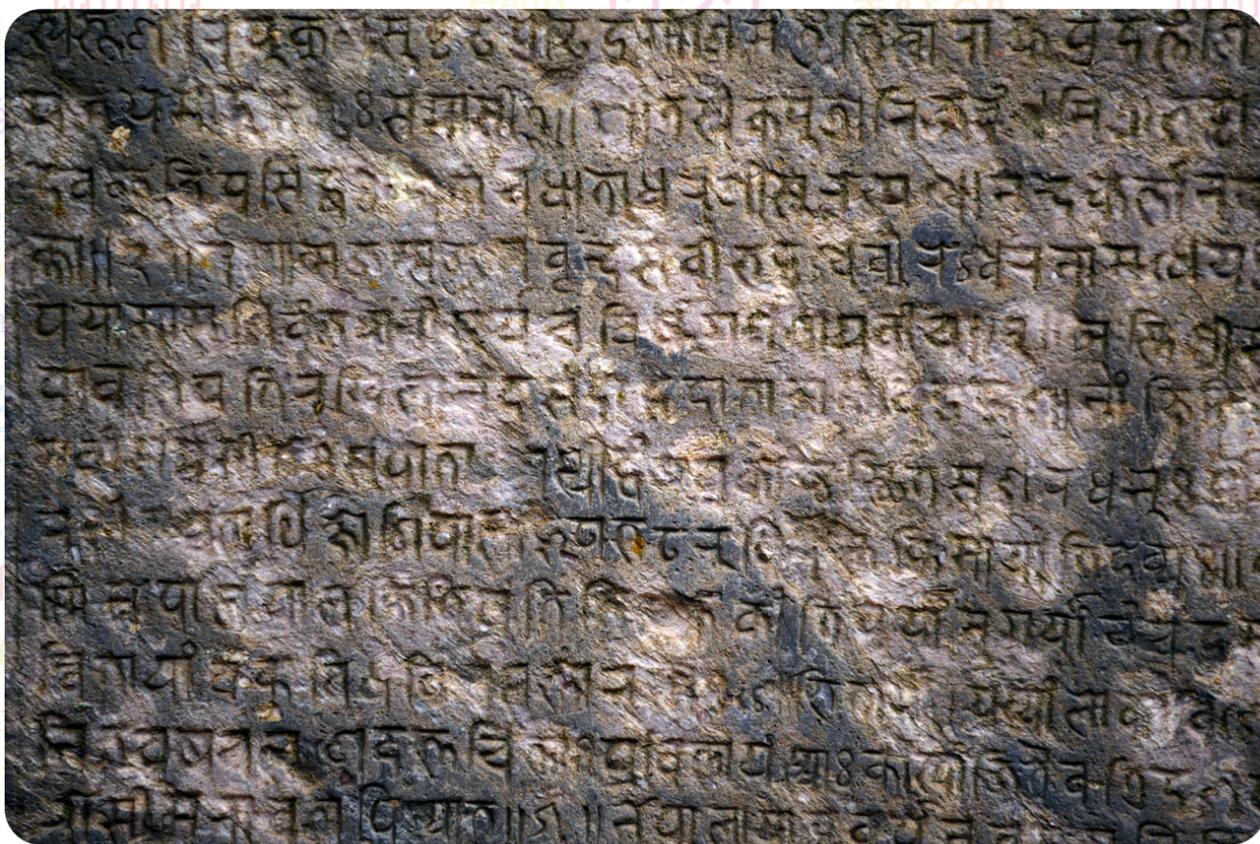
*Quid agis? Kathamasti bhavan?*

*Can you answer these questions?*

Both these questions are asking the same thing. One is in Latin and the other is in Sanskrit but do you hear them nowadays? No, because these languages are not used anymore. They are Dead languages or Lost languages. Languages die when the people speaking it die out, stop using it or if they turn their attention to another language. Sometimes the native speakers of the language forget their roots when they start advancing economically or socially and rely on a more widely used language than theirs. Even now, linguists

confirm that out of more than 7000 spoken languages, a language dies every two weeks, becoming extinct and then falling out of regular use to become a forgotten relic of human civilisation! If we look at the modern Greek language, we can see it is the successor to the ancient Hellenic Greek which gave us Ptolemy, Socrates, Plato etc. but now nothing remains of those halcyon days. And hey, the questions above were asking "How are you?"

The most commonly known dead language is Latin. However, you would be surprised as to how many European languages owe their origin to Latin, English being one. In India, Sanskrit and Prakrit were two widely used languages in the ancient times but today there is no one who knows these languages let alone speak them. Surprisingly, Mattur and Hosahalli cities near Shimoga in Karnataka, India, hold the distinction of speaking only in Sanskrit – till date!

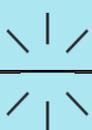


Currently, there are approximately about 573 endangered languages and more being added every year. Linguists are trying to revive dead and endangered languages so that the vital link between the past and present is not lost. In India, a scheme to revive lost languages has been started.

The people of the Gond tribe have been roped in by citizen agencies like CGNet Swara, a non-governmental organisation, to try and safeguard the indigenous language, culture, art and cuisine. They aim to preserve and promote the language by collating a standard Gondi dictionary that can facilitate education, journalism and administrative work in the state.

Languages can be revived if there are some people left who can speak it and that's where technology comes in. Most of the indigenous languages were verbal with no written documents at all. Efforts are now being made to rope in experts of those languages, record the spoken language and translate it. Languages which have seen revival include Hebrew, Manchu in China, Quechua in Peru, Basque in Spain and Sanskrit in India.

Simply put, revival of languages needs love and effort. As long as there are people who will use the language, it can never die. When a language dies, a culture dies and the world definitely loses a part of its history. Reviving indigenous communities and enabling them to live their lives as their traditions dictate will go a long way in ensuring that languages do not die. Language is ever evolving and fluid; as is human life and together both can survive in harmony.



HALLO

CIAO

HOLA

你好

BONJOUR

こんにちは

안녕

HELLO

# EVOLUTION OF LANGUAGES

Communication and social interactions evolved over centuries. While language is what has helped communication, there is no clear evidence of how spoken and written language developed. What we have is guess work and speculations. Think back if possible, to the Stone Age; some form of communication surely occurred then too. The oldest cave painting is in the Maltravieso cave, Cáceres, Spain. This is a depiction almost akin to a modern-day diary entry, the only difference being it was made by cave dwellers using their methods.



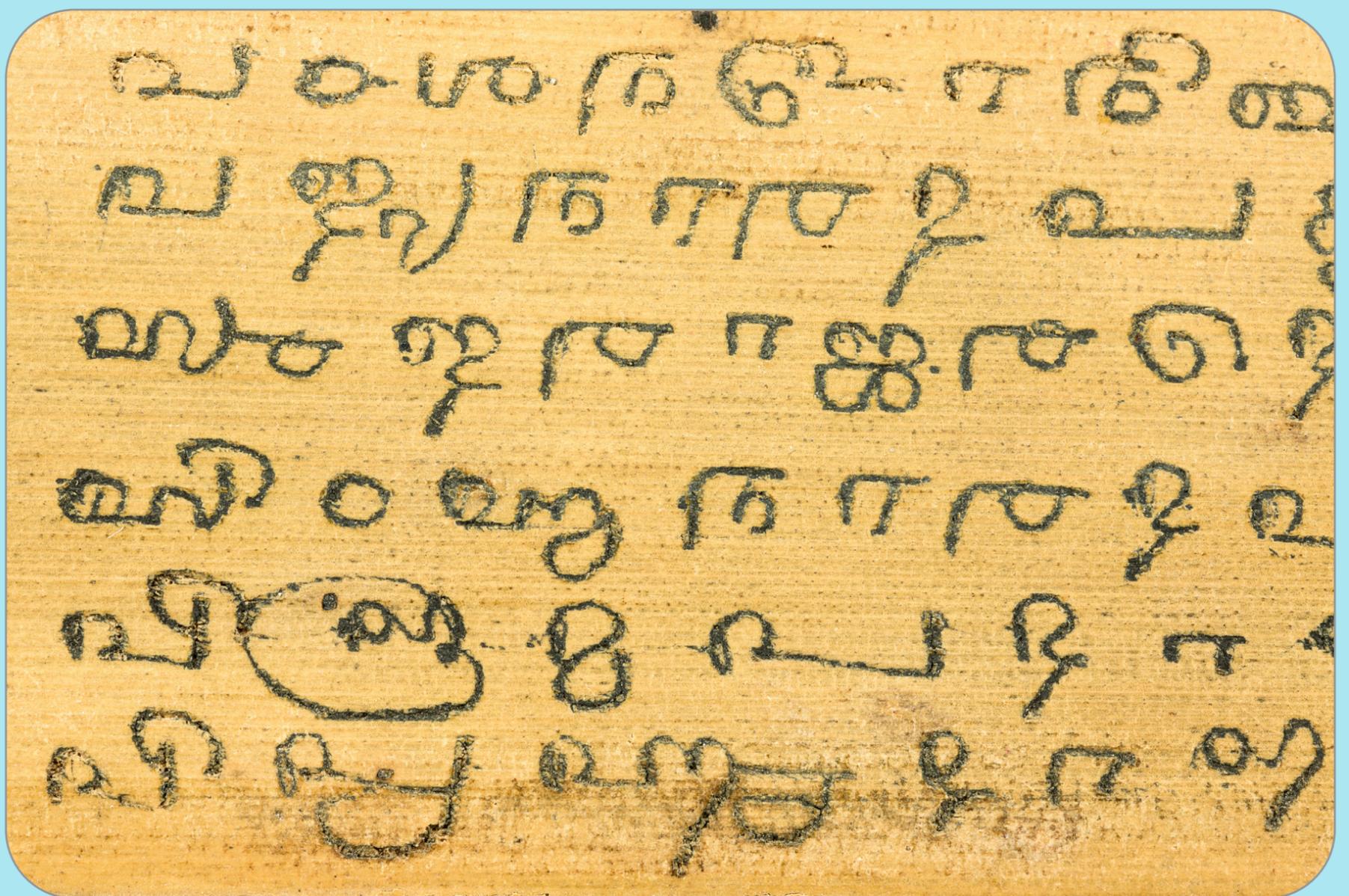
Writing became more pronounced with the advent of the barter system, building of granaries and an organised market system. The Sumerians have been credited with the invention of a form of accounting which utilised pictographs and strokes of the stylus on clay tablets. These clay tablets give valuable proof of how writing developed. Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia and even the Mayan civilisation used hieroglyphics as a means of communication. Hieroglyphics mean a form of writing where pictures or symbols are used to represent objects, concepts and even sounds. Then came the Phoenicians and we had alphabets running through the world with the seafaring merchants. The way of keeping accounts changed with the invention of writing instruments. From reeds dipped



in ink to lead pencils, ball point pens and the greatest invention ever which revolutionised communication like never before—Gutenberg printing press.

India and China had a tradition of oral recitation of poetry and prose. The Brahmi script in India is thought to be the first form for written compositions and these can be seen in the Vedic literature like the four Vedas. Literature predating the Vedas is found in the south of India and these are collectively referred to as the Sangam literature and written in the world's oldest language, Tamil. Like India, China also has evidences of the earliest form of writings preserved on bamboo or wooden strips. The Shang dynasty is credited to have invented writing. The earliest writings were like strokes on clay and followed a glyph like form. Later, writing took a whole new turn when paper and ink were created.

Writing and speaking have evolved over time and continue to do so. As long as humans survive on Earth, communication can't really stop. Digital revolution has impacted the history and story of language as well. TTYL about it!



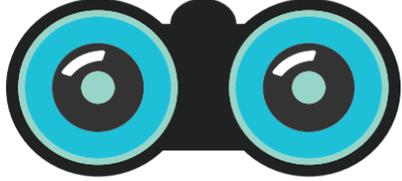
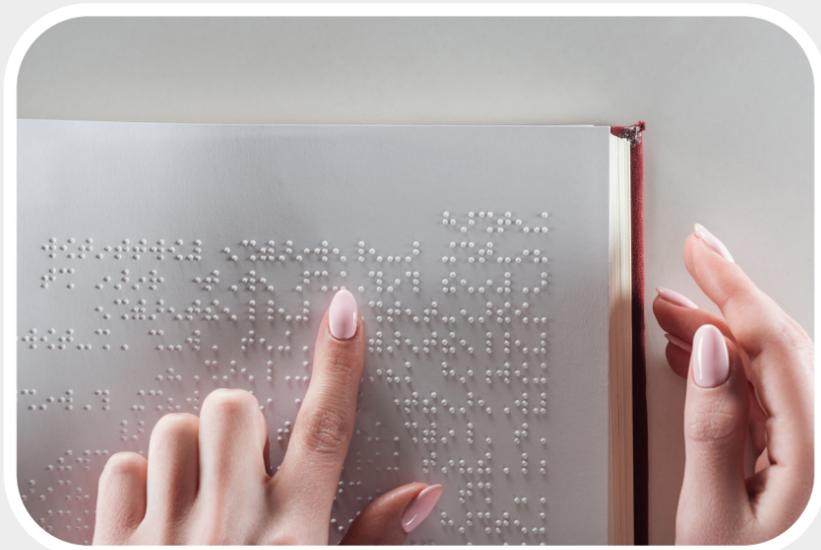


India is a land of many languages and dialects. Our constitution recognised Hindi and English as the official languages of the Indian union. Hindi was adapted as the official national language on 14 September 1949, celebrated as Hindi Diwas now each year. Hindi has many dialects like Bhojpuri, Awadhi, Brajabhasa, Kumaoni etc. Hindi is also the third most spoken language in the world. There are many more countries in the world apart from India where Hindi is spoken - Fiji Islands, Pakistan, Trinidad and Tobago, Nepal etc.

The government of India gives out the Rajbhasha Gaurav Puraskar and Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar each year as part of Hindi Diwas celebrations. These awards recognise work done to promote the Hindi language through literature and other art forms.



# WORLD VIEW

Sign languages, braille and Makaton are languages that are used to communicate between people who have either hearing, speech, sight or learning disabilities. Braille is used for the blind and follows a code that uses raised dots in a 6-dot format to give 63 characters. These are used to form letters and numbers. Each character is made up of between one to

six raised dots which are arranged in a matrix with six positions. People who have a hearing impairment use one of several sign languages to communicate. Currently, we have the British Sign Language, American Sign Language, and even an Indian Sign Language. There are records of sign language being used in ancient Greece! Makaton is a relatively recent development; it was created by three speech and language therapists who worked together in the 1970s. Makaton uses a combination of symbols and sounds to facilitate communication and, like every language, is constantly evolving. This is useful in communicating with children and adults alike, and has found special use in children with Down's syndrome.



**TECHNews****NLP****NATURAL  
LANGUAGE  
PROCESSING**

NLP or Natural Language Processing is a combination of the fields of linguistics, computer science and artificial intelligence. It deals with the interaction between humans and computers using the natural language. It is NLP which is behind technology such as text-to-speech, IVR menus when responding to customer requests, personal assistants like Siri and Alexa and also, Google Translate. While at one level, it can be understood as converting human language into data and then converting it back into human language, there is a lot more to it. Not all nuances of language can be converted to data – at least as of now. For example, while the words can be read as code by the computer but the sarcasm or humour in the language is difficult to “capture” by a computer. The main challenge of NLP then lies in how ambiguity, intended vs. hidden meaning and emotions are translated for a good user experience. Machine learning is the most used technique used in NLP to derive meaning from language.



# FUTURE with Languages



If you are a budding linguist or just in love with languages, there is a whole world of possible career options out there for you. In today's world, where boundaries between countries have blurred to a large extent, language-related studies open the doors to various specialised skill sets.

The profiles of Translators and Interpreters are remarkable as they step into the role of bridging gaps between languages, cultures and countries. And that's not all, there are specialised scenarios for different fields such as law and medicine.

Language is truly a bridge and comes in handy if you decide to be a Diplomat. A skilled Diplomat is only able to negotiate but also garners trust among the local population using their language. Having a second or third language in their arsenal is an added qualification with their academic knowledge in International Relations, Foreign policies and Political Science.



If the world of writing entices you, a good hold over language is extremely useful. Be it the traditional publishing industry or the digital media industry, strong language skills coupled with storytelling, communication and creativity are much in demand and shall stay so! With the digital revolution, you can combine your passion for all things computers and language to be part of the tribe that is building new products around NLP and AI.

If research be your mindset, you can even dive into the world of phonetics, linguistics, lexicography and etymology.

So, go ahead and start picking up a new language today!

# Match Game

Here is a list of famous authors. But, their countries of origin are all mixed up. Can you match them correctly?

Column A

- |                             |                       |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Haruki Murakami          | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. J.K. Rowling             | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Khaled Hosseini          | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Toni Morrison            | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Pablo Neruda             | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Gao Xingjian             | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Alexander Dumas          | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. Kamleshwar               | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. James Joyce             | <input type="radio"/> |

Column B

- |                       |   |             |
|-----------------------|---|-------------|
| <input type="radio"/> |   | India       |
| <input type="radio"/> |  | Nigeria     |
| <input type="radio"/> |  | UK          |
| <input type="radio"/> |  | USA         |
| <input type="radio"/> |  | Japan       |
| <input type="radio"/> |  | Afghanistan |
| <input type="radio"/> |  | China       |
| <input type="radio"/> |  | Ireland     |
| <input type="radio"/> |  | Chile       |
| <input type="radio"/> |  | France      |

# Match Game

## ANSWER KEY

Column A

Column B

1. Haruki Murakami

2. J.K. Rowling

3. Khaled Hosseini

4. Toni Morrison

5. Pablo Neruda

6. Chimamanda Ngozi  
Adichie

7. Gao Xingjian

8. Alexander Dumas

9. Kamleshwar

10. James Joyce



India



Nigeria



UK



USA



Japan



Afghanistan



China



Ireland



Chile



France



## GUESS WORDS WITH THE HINTS.

1. CYNRUCER: This word refers to money in any form.

.....

2. CCKRTIE: This word refers to a game and to an insect.

.....

3. OOMPYLNO: The first four letters of this word actually mean the opposite of the last four letters.

.....

4. COSHOL: This word refers to a group of animals that live in water and also something which is part of your growing up.

.....

5. WWLILO: If you replace one letter, this becomes something that you sleep on.





# JOKES



I'm close friends with 25 letters of the alphabet. I don't know Y.

Which author is mistaken for a source of water?

George Orwell

Source: Multiple sources

Why did Shakespeare only write with a pen?  
Pencils confused him, 2B or not 2B.

How did Voltaire like his apples?  
Candied

Three intransitive verbs walk into a restaurant.  
They sit. They eat. They leave.

## FUN FACTS



- Egyptians were the first to discover paper. Paper was made from a reedy plant called Papyrus, which grew around the river Nile, from which the name 'paper' was derived.
- The first writing ink was invented in 2500 BE by the Egyptians and the Chinese. This ink was made by mixing carbon with gum. It was then shaped into sticks and dried. Before use, it was dipped in water and made ready for writing.
- The oldest form of ink, known as India ink or China ink, is still used in China and Japan. This ink was made of burnt bones, tar and other substances. Did you know that ink has been in use since the 4th century?
- The Al-Qarawiyyin Library in Fez, Morocco, is believed to be the oldest, continuous library in the world. The library was first opened in 859 CE. It was founded by Fatima al-Fihri, the daughter of a wealthy Tunisian merchant.
- One of the oldest libraries in Asia is the Saraswathi Mahal Library in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, India. It was established by the Nayakas of Thanjavur in the 16th century and has a rare collection of palm leaf manuscripts in Tamil, Hindi, Telugu, Marathi, and many other Indian languages.



1. CURRENCY
2. CRICKET
3. MONOPOLY
4. SCHOOL
5. WILLOW/PILLOW



# ACTIVITY SHEET



## Activity 1

### Harry Potter Quiz!

The world of Harry Potter is one of magic and wizardry. Did you know that all the spells that the students of Hogwarts study are in Latin, the world's most dead language? But Latin sure is alive and kicking in all the root words of the European language and of course in this magical epic. Match the spells with their meanings. Let the games begin! Et ludo incipere!

SPELLS		MEANINGS	
1	Petrificus totalus	A	Light
2	Sonorus	B	Killing curse
3	Protego totalum	C	Paralyse someone
4	Alohomora	D	Freeze someone running at you
5	Lumox	E	Raises your voice
6	Prior incantato	F	To make someone obey every command
7	Impedimenta	G	Reveal the last spell cast by the wand
8	Imperio	H	To make the defences around you more secure
9	Crucio	I	Open
10	Avada kedavra	J	Immense pain





# Answers



SPELLS		MEANINGS	
1	Petrificus totalus	C	Paralyse someone
2	Sonorus	E	Raises your voice
3	Protego totalum	H	To make the defences around you more secure
4	Alohomora	I	Open
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9	Crucio	J	Immense pain
10	Avada kedavra	B	Killing curse



## Activity 2

### World Traveller

Travel adds experience like no other. And one of the most beautiful parts of traveling is listening to all the delightful languages and picking up phrases. Here are some phrases that will come in handy when you meet people from different nations.

- In Japanese, we greet friends by saying KON'NICHIIWA and the French would say SALUT!
- "Can you help me?" in German is KONNEN SIE MIR HELFEN? And in Thai, it is KHUŃ ŠĀMĀRŤH CHĒWY ČĤAN DĪ HĪM.
- "How much does it cost?" in Italian is QUANTO COSTA? and in Arabic, it is KAM YUKALIF?
- "How are you?" in Maori is KEI TE PĒHEA KOE? And in Swahili, it is HABARI YAKO?
- "One coffee, please" in Spanish is "UN CAFE POR FAVOR" and in Simplified Chinese is QĪNG HÈ YĪBĒI KĀFĒI.

Word	French	Spanish	German	Italian	Japanese	Arabic	Thai	Simplified Chinese	Maori	Swahili
Yes	Oui	Si	Ja	Sì	Hai	Nem	Chì	Shi	Āe	Ndio
No	Non	No	Nein	No	Bangō	La	Mì	Méiyǒu	Kāo	Hapana
Thank you	Merci	Gracias	Danke	Grazie	Arigato	Shukraan	Ķhxbkhuŋ	Xièxiè	Kia ora	Asante

Have fun learning these phrases and words! And as an additional activity, look up on the Web on how to pronounce them exactly the way they should be!

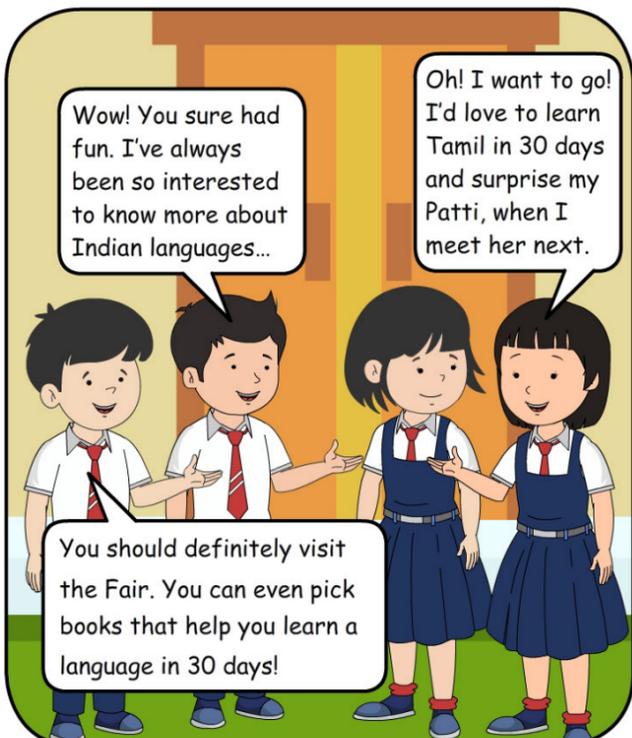
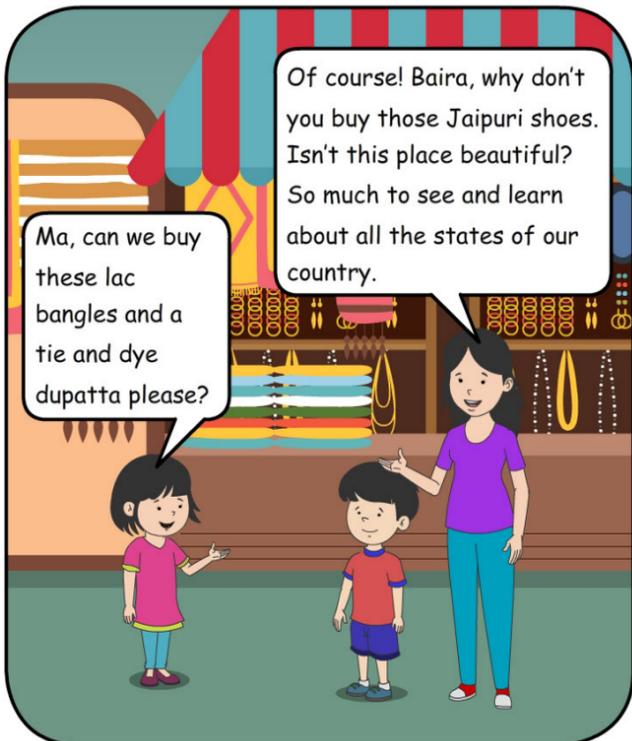
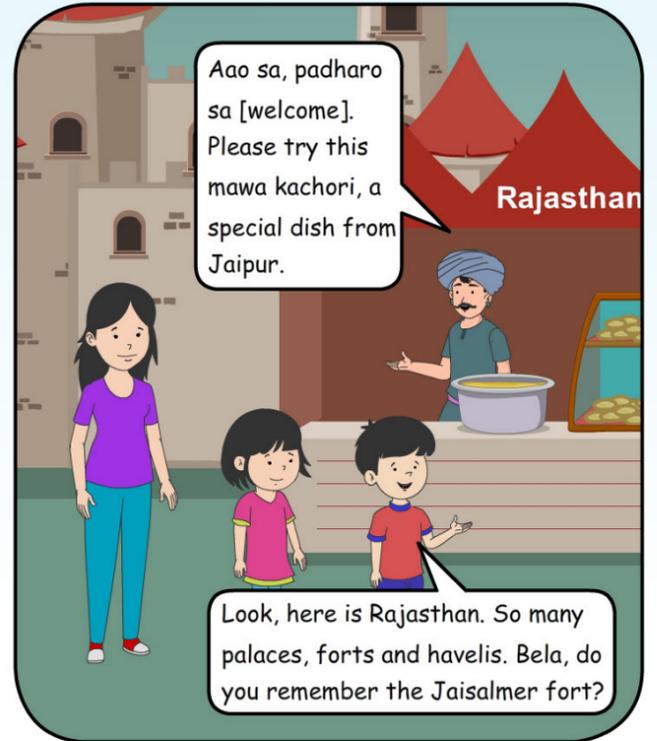
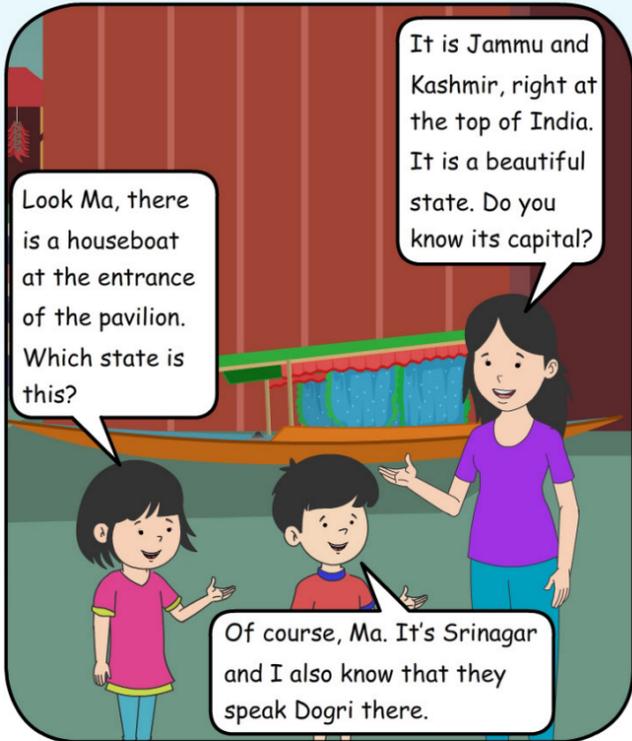




# Comic Strip



## BAIRA AND BELA



# CURRENT EVENTS UPDATES

## July 2020

### July 4

Russians have approved new constitutional reforms that would allow Russian President Vladimir Putin to run for another two six-year consecutive terms after his current term expires in 2024.



### July 8

President Donald Trump's government has formally notified the United Nations of its decision to withdraw from the World Health Organisation, after accusing WHO of siding with China on the virus outbreak.

### July 14

Bharat Biotech Ltd. has started its first phase of human clinical trials for the COVID-19 vaccine - Covaxin. The indigenous vaccine is developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune.



### July 23

The Central government has sanctioned permanent commission to the women officers in the Indian Army. The step has paved the way for empowering them to carry larger roles in the organization and bring equilibrium in the service conditions for both the female and male officers.

## July 2020

Greta Thunberg, a 17-year-old environment campaigner from Sweden, has been announced the winner of the first Gulbenkian Prize for Humanity. The prize aims at recognising people or organisations all over the world for their contributions to combat climate change.

### July 24

Kakrapar Atomic Power Plant 3 of Gujarat achieves its first criticality. Kakrapar 3 is India's first indigenous nuclear power station of 700 MWe. Kakrapar 3 is the 23rd nuclear power reactor of India.

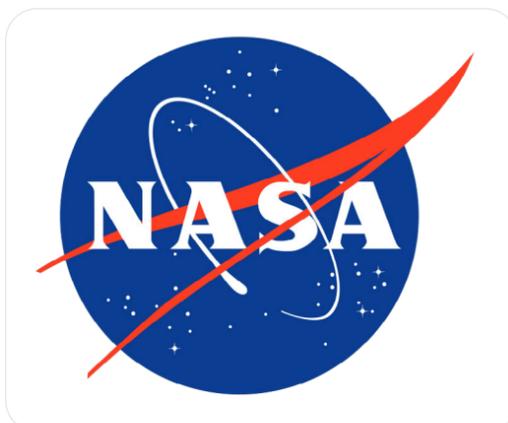
### July 29

The Rafale combat aircrafts landed at the Ambala air base in India. The pilots of the much-awaited first batch of Rafale aircraft from France were received by Air Force Chief Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria.



### July 30

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) launched its most awaited space mission, Mars Perseverance Rover 2020, from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida.



## August 2020

### August 1

UAE starts its first-ever nuclear reactor – Barakah - at Abu Dhabi on the Gulf coast.

### August 5

A huge blast ripped apart the city of Beirut in Lebanon when highly explosive material stored in a port warehouse exploded; the blast killed many and injured thousands.

### August 9

Former President of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa took oath as Prime Minister of the country for the fourth time.



Protests in Belarus erupted after the election results were declared and the current President Alexander Lukashenko beat opposition candidate Sventia Tikhanovskya.

### August 17

ISRO named a crater on the moon after Indian astrophysicist Dr. Vikram Sarabhai, who is regarded as the Father of Indian Space program.

Pandit Jasraj, India's leading vocalist and considered Sangeet Samrat in Hindustani classical music, passed away at the age of 90.



# CURRENT EVENTS UPDATES

## August 2020

### August 19

Mali President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita announced his resignation and dissolved the Parliament on August 19, 2020 after he was reportedly detained at gunpoint by rebel soldiers.

### August 25

The aircraft carrier INS Viraat that served the Indian Navy for more than 30 years is to be dismantled at Alang, Gujarat. INS Viraat is the longest serving ship of the Indian Navy.



### August 29

Hollywood actor Chadwick Boseman, best known for his work in 'Black Panther' passed away after a four-year-long battle with colon cancer; he was 43.

Lionel Messi shares his intent to leave team Barcelona.

### August 31

Former President Pranab Mukherjee passed away at the age of 84. He had served as the 13th President of India between 2012 and 2017.



## September 2020

### September 2

Indian and Chinese troops clashed at two points along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) over boundary claims leaving personnel injured on both sides.

### September 9

Kerala topped the list of the most literate states in India in the National Statistical Office (NSO) survey. The literacy rate of Kerala is 96.2%. Andhra Pradesh stood last with 66.4% literacy rate.

### September 12

Beijing has imposed "reciprocal restrictions" on all American diplomats in China and Hong Kong in response to restrictions imposed on its embassy staff in the United States. This is a new low between US and China.

### September 14

Naomi Osaka wins her second US Open title defeating Victoria Azarenka.



Dominic Thiem won the men's singles title, defeating first time Grand Slam finalist Alexander Zverev.

### September 16

Yoshihide Suga has been elected as the new Prime Minister of Japan after the resignation of Shinzo Abe, due to poor health.

## September 2020

Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan, a leading scholar of Indian classical dance, art, architecture and art history, passed away at the age of 92. She was the founding Director of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts.

### September 18

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, passed away. She made a huge difference to the feminist movement and is regarded as a pathbreaker.

Lok Sabha passed two bills including the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020 and the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020.

### September 19

The United Nations has named Udit Singhal, an 18-year-old from India, as Young Leader for the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals). Udit Singhal is the founder of Glass2Sand, a zero-waste ecosystem that addresses the growing menace of glass waste in Delhi.

### September 22

Women officers will join the helicopter stream of Indian Navy for the first time ever.

### September 25

SP Balasubrahmanyam, veteran musician and singer of the Indian film industry, passed away at the age of 74, due to health complications related to COVID-19 virus infection.



Author: Sriram Narasimhan Silverscreen Media Inc. (<https://silverscreen.in>)