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Building common ground: How one initiative is teaching India the language of peace

By Genesis

Published on: Oct 16, 2025 04:36 pm IST









Common Ground's initiative provides educators with tools for pluralism, emphasising interreligious engagement and inclusive curricula.



Common Ground reveals alarming survey results on religious and caste-based slurs among students, prompting a call for action. (Source: Common Ground)

nation of wide diversity, where classrooms and communities can sometimes become divided, a quiet movement is underway—led by 17-year-old Gauri Gupta. She is the founder of Common Ground, an initiative using multireligious learning and peacebuilding to help create a society where difference is seen as something to understand and respect.

The reason for this work is clear. Common Ground's nationwide research, surveying over 4,000 students and 520 teachers, revealed a concerning picture: 83% of students

The Statesman

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From oral histories to digital archives: How Gauri Gupta is fighting caste discrimination

Gupta's work goes beyond awareness and education. The People's Collectives regularly brings Dalit and Tribal leaders together with government officials including panchayat representatives.

Statesman News Service | New Delhi | October 28, 2025 10:36 am















Photo: Special Arrangement

auri Gupta, a 17-year-old woman, is quietly shaking up the social landscape in India. Caste discrimination and atrocities still shape lives across the country. And, this young activist has taken it upon herself to amplify long-ignored voices.

Through her organisation, The People's Collectives, Gupta is combining oral histories, digital innovation, education and legal reform to create real change for Dalit and Tribal communities.

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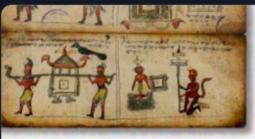
"Our goal is to decentralise caste power and return agency to people whose voices have been silenced for generations," Gupta explains. Already, her work spans four states: Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan.

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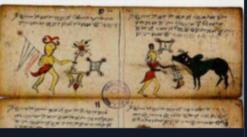


@rarebookschool.bsky.social doesn't generally accept high school students but they made an exception for Gauri in my Fragmentology class last summer. I am so proud of her! LOOK WHAT SHE DID! #IIIF









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Bridging archives: The role of IIIF in global manuscript preservation India's manuscript tradition is among the richest in the world, spanning centuries,

languages, and disciplines. Yet, much of this vast repository remains fragmented, ...

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IIIF Consortium @iiif.bsky.social · 19d

This is wonderful! Please send Gauri our way. We'd love to see her work, maybe at our Online Meeting in January?

 \bigcirc 1 03 仚

Lisa Fagin Davis @lisafdavis.bsky.social · 19d

I'll let her know!

Gauri Gupta @gauriguptaa.bsky.social · 18d

Thank you! None of this would have been possible without your quidance!!!!

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Rare Book School @rarebookschool.bsky.social · 19d RBS Fabulous!!

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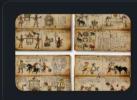


Katie Hodges-Kluck, PhD 🕝 • 3rd+ + Follow Communications | Public Humanities | Program Management | Histori... 1w . (5)

Wise words from Indian high school student Gauri Gupta, who writes about the importance of preserving archives through collective, inclusive practices: "To inherit is not to possess, it is to choose responsibility over reverence."

I met Gauri this past summer when she took Lisa Fagin Davis's course on Medieval Manuscript Fragments at Rare Book School, and I am excited to see where her manuscript work takes her!

https://lnkd.in/e5AYgEgB



Bridging archives: The role of IIIF in global manuscript preservation

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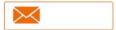
Bridging archives: The role of IIIF in global manuscript preservation

October 8, 2025, 7:00 PM IST / Gauri Gupta in Voices, India, TOI



















India's manuscript tradition is among the richest in the world, spanning centuries, languages, and disciplines. Yet, much of this vast repository remains fragmented, fragile, and inaccessible. The technical, linguistic, and curatorial expertise required to work with these materials is immense, and urgently needed.

At the same time, a parallel challenge has emerged. Despite the scale and significance of India's manuscript heritage, youth engagement still remains limited. This disconnect is due to the absence of structured exposure, sustained mentorship, and platforms that translate this legacy into



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भारत की खोती लिपियों को बचाती एक किशोरी - लिंग्वाक्वेस्ट ऐप से सीखेंगे बच्चे पुरानी लिपियां

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धूंढ़ाड़ी लिपि को पुनर्जीवित करने की पहलः कक्षा 12

की छात्रा गौरी गुप्ता और उनके शिक्षकों का प्रयास

जयपुर (खबरों की दुनिया)। राजस्थान की धूंढाड़ी लिपि, जो कभी जयपुर, दौसा, टोंक और सीकर जैसे इलाकों की सांस्कृतिक पहचान हुआ करती थी, अब लुप्त होने की कगार पर है। इसी को देखते हुए जयपुर की कक्षा 12 की छात्रा गौरी गुप्ता ने अपने स्कूल के शिक्षकों की मदद से विद्यार्थियों के लिए एक विशेष कार्यशाला का आयोजन किया। गौरी ने बताया, जब मुझे अपने शिक्षकों से पता चला कि हमारी धुंढाड़ी बोली की अपनी लिपि भी थी, तो मैंने तय किया कि हमें इसे सीखना और सिखाना चाहिए। अगर हम ही इसे नहीं सीखेंगे तो आने वाली पीढियां इसे कभी नहीं जान पाएंगी। कार्यशाला में शिक्षकों ने विद्यार्थियों को



बताया कि धूंढ़ाड़ी लिपि का प्रयोग पहले लोकगीतों, भजनों, जातक कथाओं और गांव के दस्तावेजों में होता था। लेकिन अब अधिकतर लोग धूंढ़ाड़ी को देवनागरी में ही लिखते हैं, जिससे इसकी मूल लिपि और उसमें छुपी ध्वनियों व शब्दों की सुंदरता खोती जा रही है। बच्चों को धूंढ़ाड़ी लिपि के

अक्षर सीखने का अभ्यास भी कराया गया। प्रत्येक छात्र को अभ्यास पत्र दिए गए, जिसमें उन्होंने अक्षरों के आकार, मात्राओं और संयुक्ताक्षरों का अभ्यास किया। एक छात्रा ने कार्यशाला के बाद कहा, मुझे नहीं पता था कि हमारी बोली की भी अपनी लिपि है। अब मैं इसमें अपने नाना से कहानियां लिखवाऊंगी। गौरी के शिक्षक ने कहा, लिपि सिर्फ लेखन पद्धति नहीं होती. बल्कि उसमें समाज की संस्कृति, बोली की ध्वनियां और सोच बसती है। अगर हम इसे खो देंगे तो अपनी पहचान का बड़ा हिस्सा भी खो देंगे। गौरी ने बताया कि यह कार्यशाला उनकी पहल 'भाषा और लिपि संरक्षण' का हिस्सा है।

Experience the Vibrant Tapestry of Urban Life in "JIVANAM - Life in the City" Exhibition by Gauri Gupta

Updated on: 29 May,2023 01:09 PM IST | Mumbai

BrandMedia | advertorial@mid-day.com

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Embark on a visual journey through the captivating streets of Mumbai as talented young artist Gauri Gupta presents her solo exhibition, "JIVANAM - Life in the City."



Gauri Gupta - A 15-year-old innovator, writer and street photographer

This immersive exhibition explores the contemplation of life in the bustling metropolis through a captivating collection of photographs that capture the essence of everyday experiences.

Gauri Gupta, a 15-year-old writer and street photographer, brings a unique and creative perspective to her work. Her keen eye and thought-provoking approach have already garnered attention from esteemed publications, including the New York Times. Now, she invites art enthusiasts and the

Read to India: Empowering Visually Impaired Readers with Inclusive Storytelling and Accessible Literature













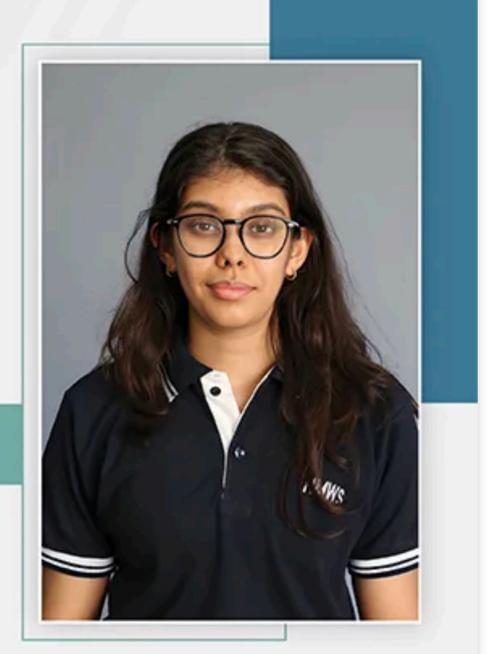




READ TO INDIA

Empowering Visually Impaired Readers with Inclusive Storytelling and Accessible Literature





All signs point to art

Last weekend, Access For All founder Siddhant Shah was in Delhi as the Mumbai-based accessibility initiative participated in the Purple Fest hosted by the Rashtrapati Bhavan. "We have been working with Gauri Gupta's Read To India, a start-up organisation making literature and reading accessible for special needs audiences. We presented a Braille version of The Constitution of India and The Ramayana with tactile images. It takes off from the idea of Braillecomics, where visually-impaired individuals can also experience stories in vivid detail," Shah revealed. The images, accompanied with text in Braille enable readers to experience details such as Ravana's 10 heads, or Hanuman carrying the Sanjeevani mountain, using their touch. "The books have been sent out to 10 blind schools, and are available on order," added Shah.





(Top) A visually-impaired visitor reads the book; (above) a close-up of a tactile image. PICS COURTESY/ACCESSFORALL

Gauri Gupta's Journey to Empowering the Visually Impaired

Updated on: 05 August, 2024 05:09 PM IST | Mumbai

Buzz I sumit.zarchobe@mid-day.com

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Gauri Gupta's journey from a fair to founding Read to India exemplifies the power of determination, innovation, and inclusivity.



Gauri Gupta

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted traditional education systems worldwide, presenting unique challenges and opportunities.



The Statesman

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Inspiration Hub

Gauri Gupta, 16, redefines art and education at Jaipur Art Week

The uniqueness of Gauri's exhibition lies in the incorporation of tactile elements, emphasizing the importance of touch in art appreciation.

Brand Post | New Delhi | February 4, 2024 12:04 am | Updated : February 6, 2024 6:08 pm















aipur Art Week is poised to become the canvas for a transformative exhibition challenging the conventional norms of art and education. At the forefront of this groundbreaking initiative is 15-yearold Gauri Gupta, a prodigious artist, innovator, and founder of The Read India Foundation. Gauri's exhibition, "JIVANAM - Life in the City," promises to bring a fresh wave of inclusivity and diversity to the art world.

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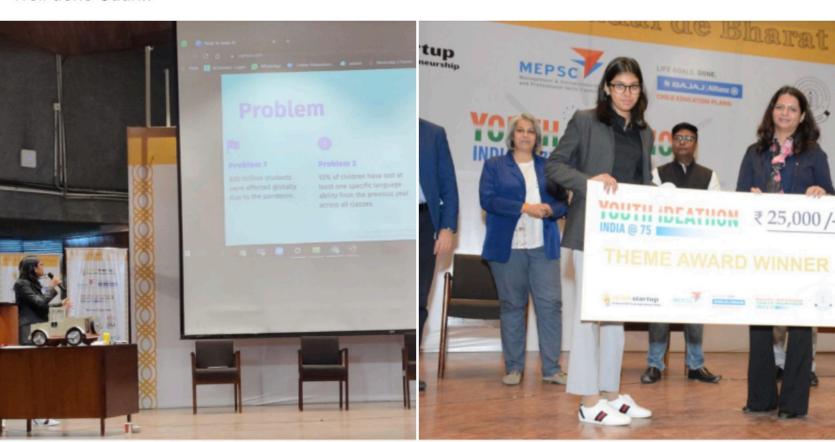
The Cathedral and John Connon School

November 24, 2021, 3

Gauri Gupta of Std. 8 took part in the Youth Ideathon-India @ 75, India's largest Festival of "Ideas" from classes 6th-12th organized by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and ThinkStartup.

Gauri successfully presented her pitch for her initiative Read to India and emerged as the top 10 finalists. She won a cash prize of Rs. Rs.25,000 for the "Best Social Entrepreneurship Idea."

Well done Gauri!!





ANGELS MINOR OF MUMBAL

Special Mention

Gauri Gupta

Founder, Art Ki Pathshala

Melwater

Abhishek Karnani

Director Free Press Journal

February 16, 2024 Mumbai