



THE PRIORY ACADEMY

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Environmental News

Aashritha Guntuka

Green Tech on the Rise: Innovations for a Sustainable Future

In an era defined by climate concerns and environmental degradation, sustainable technology has emerged as a beacon of hope. Green tech encompasses a wide range of innovations designed to reduce environmental impact, conserve resources, and promote a more sustainable future. From renewable energy solutions to eco-friendly materials, these technologies are transforming industries and paving the way for a cleaner, healthier planet.

One of the most promising areas within sustainable tech is renewable energy. Solar, wind, and hydro power are becoming increasingly efficient and cost-effective, offering viable alternatives to fossil fuels. Innovations in energy storage, such as advanced batteries and thermal storage systems, are further enhancing the reliability and accessibility of renewable energy sources. These advancements are crucial for reducing carbon emissions and mitigating the effects of climate change.

Beyond energy, sustainable tech is revolutionising various sectors, including agriculture, transportation, and manufacturing. Precision agriculture, for example, uses data analytics and sensor technology to optimise use of resources and minimise waste in farming. Electric vehicles and alternative fuel technologies are transforming the transportation industry, reducing air pollution and dependence on fossil fuels. In manufacturing, green chemistry and circular economy principles are driving the development of eco-friendly materials and processes that minimise environmental impact throughout the product lifecycle.



Space News

Aashritha Guntuka

The Cosmic quest: Hunting for Life Beyond our Planet

The question of whether we are alone in the universe has captivated humanity for centuries. With each passing year, our technological capabilities expand, and our understanding of the cosmos deepens, bringing us closer to potentially answering this profound question. The search for extra terrestrial life is not just a scientific endeavour; it's a philosophical journey that challenges our understanding of life itself and our place in the grand cosmic tapestry.

One of the most promising avenues in this quest is the exploration of exoplanets—planets orbiting stars other than our Sun. Thousands of exoplanets have been discovered in recent years, some of which reside in the "habitable zone" of their stars, where conditions might be right for liquid water to exist. The presence of liquid water is considered a key ingredient for life as we know it. Scientists are using advanced telescopes, like the James Webb Space Telescope, to analyse the atmospheres of these exoplanets, searching for biosignatures—chemical indicators that could suggest the presence of life.

Beyond exoplanet research, the search for extra terrestrial intelligence (SETI) continues to scan the skies for signals from other civilizations. Using radio telescopes, SETI projects listen for patterns or messages that could not have originated from natural sources. While no definitive signal has been detected yet, the search continues, fuelled by the belief that intelligent life might be trying to communicate across the vast distances of space. The implications of discovering such a signal would be revolutionary, reshaping our understanding of our place in the universe and potentially opening up new avenues for communication and collaboration.

Environmental News

Sara Stepien

Rainfall this Spring

Whilst some parts of the UK may have experienced heavy rain and thunder storms earlier this month, hot, dry weather has been dominant.

Currently, this Spring is the driest season on record according to the Met office. The mostly dry, hot weather should continue in the UK for about at least ten more days. The Environment Agency has said that the reservoirs are currently quite safe and healthy, but there is still a fairly large chance of a summer drought later this year.

Some parts of Greater London, Hampshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire, and Yorkshire have had twenty days without a single drop of rain. Also, in other parts of England, chances of rainfall are extremely way below average. Since the beginning of Spring in March, some parts of the UK such as Wales and South-West England have experienced healthy amounts of rainfall. In fact, the Met office has told us that with the average UK rainfall accumulation of just 80mm so far this Spring (compared to an average of 229mm) we're currently running at the driest Spring on record. As well as being weirdly dry, there has also been a lot of sunshine in the UK. So far, April has been the sunniest month on record in the UK, following the third sunniest March ever. Sunshine is also running at quite high temperatures so far this May.

National News

Florence Mayer and Ella Brandin-Lain

Royal Marriage

Did you know that Prince William and Princess Kate have been married for fourteen years? They walked down the aisle at Westminster Abbey, all those years ago, and decided to marry one another. There were so many excited people filling the streets to see the wonderful, happy couple.

They celebrated their anniversary in Scotland on the bewitching Isle of Mull. Prince William and Princess Kate cruised around the paradise for a total of two days, to celebrate their 14th Wedding Anniversary. They will also be touring Community halls that the Royal Foundation is willing to refurbish for the occasion.

The devoted couple, who married on the 29th April 2011 at Westminster Abbey, stayed for two days at a self-catering cottage at Mull to celebrate their anniversary. This duo has been inseparable since stumbling upon each other whilst studying at the University of St Andrews; however they are now recognized by their Scottish titles 'The Duke and Duchess of Rothesay' when in Scotland.

This is the first time that Kate has engaged in an overnight stay since her cancer treatments. They have joined an incredible journey to create new life and aim to help support charities and raise awareness. They have wanted to take an exciting adventure to Mull for a long time; now they have completed that wish!

Mull is a rather beautiful place that must have attracted the couple to come and stay. Princess Kate has developed a new love and joy in nature and has decided to connect more with the environment.

Crime News

Finley Wilkes

Why are Police Sketches so Unsettling?

If you spend a decent amount of time on the internet, then you may have seen one of many thousands of images of police sketches – many of which look quite creepy.

One reason for this creepiness is something called “the uncanny valley”. This term is used to describe things that seem normal at just a glance, but when you look at them for more than a second or two, they turn out to be quite unnatural or even scary. The concept was first mentioned by Japanese robotics professor Masahori Mori in his book *Bukimi No Tani*, which translates directly to “uncanny valley” in English. His original hypothesis states, in simple terms: as something becomes more human if there is a positive response; but when something is almost human, there is a strong negative response. There are many theories to where this phenomena comes from, including early humans’ repulsion to “ugly” or “unappealing” mates, avoidance of disease, and the rise of artificial intelligence. Despite this, we do not actually know where it comes from.

Another reason for this discomfort could be exaggeration by the artists themselves, as strong physical features are often over-exaggerated to become even more prominent and memorable in order to help people (or potential witnesses) recognise criminals more easily and more often. Then again, many police sketches do not help to catch suspects as many studies have shown that they are useful less than twenty percent of the time – with some showing results of just eight percent.

Nature News

Sara Stepien

Greenflies

The recent warm weather has caused high numbers of greenflies. Greenflies, also known as aphids, mostly come out in Spring after overwintering their eggs. The longer days, higher humidity, and higher temperatures make a perfect environment for greenflies to thrive.

Apparently, there are lots more coming out than ever before. As annoying as the flies may be, they are actually pretty useful. They are part of the vital biodiversity of our gardens. They provide an important food source for animals (such as birds) and insects (such as ladybirds). Greenflies only live for a couple of weeks, maybe a month at most, and they are very safe since they don't spread disease and they don't bite.

They feed on sap, so gardeners are advised to protect their flowers. To clear them off, you could plant lavender, marigolds, chives, and garlic, along with using peppermint and rosemary oils. White vinegar can also be used to deter other animals such as mice, squirrels, and foxes.

Film Review

Emily Dove

'Poison' by Wes Anderson

'Poison' is a short film based on the book by famous author Roald Dahl. Dahl is credited as a writer, and so is Wes Anderson, who also directed the film. Anderson is known for his use of colour palettes, the art Nouveau style, and textured costumes; his recognizable films are 'The Grand Budapest Hotel' and 'Fantastic Mr Fox'.

'Poison' tells the story of Harry Pope, who gets stuck under a poisonous snake in his bed. His associates Timber Woods and Dr. Ganderbai make it their mission to save Harry from a potentially horrific death; however there is an unexpected twist that will leave you shocked...

The film stars Dev Patel as Timber Woods, Benedict Cumberbatch as Harry Pope, Ralph Fiennes as Roald Dahl, and lastly, Ben Kingsley as Dr. Ganderbai.

'Poison' is rated a twelve by the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) due to mild discrimination and language. The film was released on the 30th September 2023, and is categorized in the genres of comedy and drama.

Rotten tomato's review: 94% Tomatometer and 71% Popcornmeter

Personal Review: First of all, I like the look of 'Poison' as it is set out almost like a theatre production, and as an audience, we get to see it being used. This is not seen much in film, so it was interesting and eye-opening. Secondly, I think the acting was good and theatrical, especially for Dahl's audience. For most of the short film, there are long takes which immerse the audience and help them make sense of everything happening on screen. Therefore, this short film is definitely worth watching as it is different compared to other films out there in terms of style, and it is heart warming to see another Roald Dahl book come to life with the help of talented professionals.



Conflict News

Anusha Senthilkumar

Education Under Fire: The Impact of Indo-Pakistani Conflict on School Children

In the shadows of the Indo-Pakistani conflict, for children the simple act of going to school becomes a daunting journey through the landscape of fear and uncertainty. Their innocent curiosity is overshadowed by the grim realities of war – a daily experience for countless students living in conflict-affected areas.

The impact on children's education is devastating. Schools, once safe havens of learning, are frequently forced to close their doors, leaving children stranded in a limbo of interrupted studies and shattered dreams. Even when schools remain open, the shadow of fear looms large, with parents hesitant to send their children into harm's way. The result is a generation robbed of their right to education, their potential stifled by the constant threat of violence. It's a heart-breaking situation, where the promise of a brighter future is dimmed by the darkness of conflict.

But beyond the disruption of education, there lies a deeper, more insidious wound – the psychological scars of war. These children are forced to grow up too quickly, their innocence stolen by the horrors they witness. They see their homes destroyed, their loved ones injured or killed, and their communities torn apart. The trauma they endure can lead to a range of mental health issues, from anxiety and depression to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This is a heavy burden for anyone to bear, let alone a child who should be focussing on learning and growing.

Literary News

Jihanabelle Slavin

The Hay Book Festival

Hay-on-Wye, in Wales is the UK's most well-known 'book town', and once a year, in May, the Hay literary festival is hosted there!

The Hay festival combines mediums of literature, art, theatre, music, science, and comedy in one to two weeks of talks, shows, and workshops. People come from all over the world to attend; notable appearances have included Stephen Fry, Melvyn Bragg, and Carol Ann Duffy who have all hosted events at the festival in past years.

The festival was launched in 1988 and used to be held in a different venue every year before being given a fixed point just South of the town in 2005.

Many of the shows are recorded or live-streamed online so do keep an eye out for any events on their website you'd be interested in watching, as they may become available soon. Alternatively, you could come all the way to Wales to see the shows! Each year, the town sees over 150,000 people attending, camping on nearby sites, and walking into the town for the day.

In 2023, I had the fantabulous opportunity of seeing the legend that is Margaret Atwood giving a talk on her collective works. It was wonderful and so was she.

If you have the option to attend this festival, you should! It's a brilliant and unique experience.

Education News

Zara Imran

Why do Some Members of Staff Want to End the Use of Mobile Phones in Schools?

The use of mobile phones can be distracting, and with the majority of secondary (and also Y6 primary) students being in possession of them, members of staff have acknowledged that their unnecessary use can alter the effect of the level of education being taught to them. Schools have the flexibility to decide whether or not to ban phone usage, and many encourage students to not even use them during break and lunch, but no legal requirements have been issued yet. This ban is only used as guidance, and as an idea, to help students focus better on their work and overall education. However, recent studies show that lower phone usage doesn't help students achieve better grades itself, and frequent studying and higher goals can help attain a higher level of understanding in a variety of subjects.

Can Banning Mobile Phones Solve Any Other Issues in School?

Mobile phones contain blue light, which is a source of addiction, and as a result of this, students' minds can wander off so that they are thinking about the post their friends sent yesterday, or that video they saw on social media. The point is, unnecessary and false information can mislead the minds of young students, and give them different things to think about rather than the industrial revolution, or whatever they're learning about in school. Despite this, many students may think that there are some benefits of mobile phone usage.

Game Review

Gregor Wallace and Thomas Swinburne

Five Nights at Freddy's, One and Two

Five Nights at Freddy's: the game series that scares you from what you *don't* see. It is one of the most lore-heavy series of games out there, and it is what constitutes almost half of Game Theory's (YouTube channel) entire video library.

FNaF is a horror game series based in a pizzeria for the first two games and then in various other locations in the later games, but those may be in a later article.

In FNaF One, you are stationed in a security office, with two doors on either side. You must defend yourself against the five animatronics that wander the pizzeria at night. If they are at your door, close it. Use the corridor light to spot any that get too close. Power is also a concern, as you don't have enough to close both doors and stall for the night (each night is nine minutes long, the longest of any of the games). Note that sound cues are crucial to your survival, and without them the difficulty is ramped up significantly.

In FNaF Two, you are once again stationed in a security office, but this time there are no doors. Instead, you are armed with a torch and an... animatronic mask? But why, you ask? Well, the animatronics have facial recognition systems that can tell if someone is a human, based on their face. The torch is used to fend off one of the animatronics, who is impervious to the mask and will still attack you. And the final twist: the Puppet. You must use the cameras to wind up the music box to prevent it from attacking you and survive the night.

Overall rating of both games: 7.5/10