

Mukesh Ambani, Asia's Richest Man, Rebuilds 261-Year-Old British Toystore

A struggling 261-year-old U.K. toy-store chain is seeking a new lease of life in the hands of billionaire Mukesh Ambani, who's looking to India where about a fifth of the world's babies are born to fuel its revival. Hamleys, a British retail icon that hasn't made a profit for a number of years, plans to quadruple its outlets in the former British colony to more than 500 in three years despite the pandemic, according to Darshan Mehta, chief executive officer of Mr Ambani's Reliance Brands Ltd.

Mr Ambani, 63, bought Hamleys in 2019 to strengthen his retail footprint as part of the ongoing transformation of his oil-and-chemicals conglomerate Reliance Industries Ltd. into a consumer and technology behemoth. The deep pockets of Asia's richest man and India's demographics could help breathe new life into Hamleys, whose share of global toy sales was estimated at 0.6% last year by Euromonitor International.

(Source: www.ndtv.com)



Indian e-Visa restored for 156 countries



India has now restarted e-visa facilities for 156 countries. This e-visa facility is applicable for international tourists from 156 countries, who wish to visit for conferences, medical purposes, or business. The e-visa also extends to medical attendants. After restrictions imposed in 2020, the number of countries have now reduced. Out of the excluded countries, the most notable ones are Iran, Indonesia, Canada, the UK, China, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia.

International air travel was suspended by MHA on March 23, 2020, to and from 107 immigration checkpoints. Visa restrictions were then relaxed and later citizens from the U.S., the U.K., France, and Germany under air bubble schemes. The MHA said in its order issued on March 30 that the e-Visa under the categories of e-business visa, e-medical visa, e-medical attendant visa, and e-conference visa will be restored with immediate effect. This means that at this moment citizens from the 156 countries can make use of this facility.

(Source : www.timesofindia.com)

EsselWorld Bird Park makes its Instagram followers nostalgic with a testimonial video series on #WorldPicnicDay

While most of us are back at home keeping ourselves and our loved ones safe and protected from the pandemic, the only thing that keeps us going on are the fun memories of our picnic days! On #WorldPicnicDay, EsselWorld Bird Park shared a video and photo series of the guests sharing their cherished memories of their visit to the Park on its Instagram Page. Launched in April 2019, India's first interactive Bird Park surely gave some beautiful and implausible experiences to the guests that are still freshly etched in their minds.

The guests shared a mixed bag of joyful moments that they had spent at EsselWorld Bird Park. A guest spoke about how they liked the fact that they could see so many exotic birds at one glance which they have only seen on TV or internet or on digital platforms. Another guest mentioned about how the Bird Handlers were so friendly, knowledgeable and shared so much of information about the exotic birds which made the whole trip meaningful and worthwhile. The video also had a guest talking about the Bird presentation and the feeding session that he enjoyed with his family.



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Tourism sector to be biggest beneficiary of vaccination drive: EaseMyTrip co-founder

There is huge pent-up demand for travel and tourism, and the sector will be the biggest beneficiary after vaccination picks up in India, said Prashant Pitti, co-founder and executive director, EaseMyTrip.

The parent company, Easy Trip Planners Ltd, was listed on the stock exchanges last month, and announced an interim 100% dividend of ₹2 per share on its equity shares earlier this week. Travel will bounce back once at least 30% of the population is vaccinated and this is likely to be achieved in the coming months, as there is an intent from the government to see it through, Pitti said.

"We are a cash-rich company with zero debt in the books. Not much capex (capital expenditure) is required for future as 100% of the business is on the website or app," he added. Easy Trip Planners' ₹510-crore public float was subscribed 159.33 times in March.

(Source: www.livemint.com)



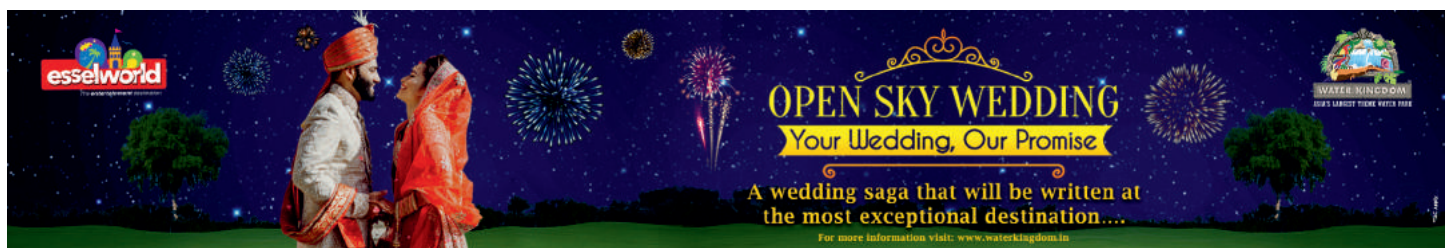
Legoland Discovery Centre's First Lego Braille Bricks event



The first of the LEGO Braille Bricks special events to take place at one of Merlin Entertainments' LEGOLAND Discovery Centres took place in Melbourne, in partnership with Vision Australia, the LEGO Foundation's official partner for the distribution of LEGO Braille Bricks in Australia. Over 20 families were welcomed to the attraction for the special event to discover the new range of LEGO bricks, which have been designed to offer blind or low vision children a first opportunity to discover braille from a young age.

Each LEGO Braille brick has raised bumps that have been modified to correspond to a letter or character of the braille alphabet. Each brick also has a printed letter or character to allow those children who are blind or have low vision to learn and play alongside sighted classmates, family members and educators.

(Source: www.merlinentertainments.biz)



Saudi Arabia launches first masterplan to develop AIUla

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, chairman of the Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU) unveiled The Journey through Time masterplan on April 7, 2021.

AIUla is billed as the world's largest living museum, and the masterplan includes 5 unique districts, 5 heritage sites, 15 cultural assets and 10 million square metres of green spaces. Additionally, the plan includes more than 5,000 hotel rooms, 9km of regenerated cultural oasis, 20km of public realm and 46km of low-carbon tramway.

The Journey through Time follows the framework of Vision 2030 and aims to achieve harmony between nature and people and preserve the cultural legacy of AIUla. It will also create development opportunities and sustainable economic growth for Saudi.

The masterplan consists of five districts - AIUla Old Town (district 1), Dadan (district 2), Jabal Ikamah (district 3), Nabataean Horizon (district 4) and Hegra Historical City (district 5).

(Source: www.blooloop.com)



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