



Red is the colour of our contest edition. In alliance with the cupid, it represents our passionate love for the edition.
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 AIS Saket, Page Editors



Making Left 'Right'

The Left Hand Shop - A Convenience Store For Those Facing Inconveniences



Left handers' gel pen (L) kids checking out products



GT reporters in conversation with Mrs Sandeep Pavitter Singh



Mrs and Mr Sandeep Pavitter Singh at The Left Hand Shop



Ishika Sharma, XI D & Prisha, IX B
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Can you sharpen that pencil with ease? Is that notebook comfortable for you to write? If you have no difficulty in using these everyday objects, chances are that you are right-handed. Left-handers, on the other hand, do not enjoy the luxury of this comfort. Alleviating their everyday ordeal are Mrs & Mr Sandeep Pavitter Singh, co-founder, DiffSuff E-Commerce Private Limited. Their initiative 'The Left Hand Shop', a first of its kind, online platform offers a wide range of stationery products for left-handed children, alleviating the problems they face in their growing up years.

It all began at home...

"Our elder son is left-handed. When he got promoted to Class IV, he started using gel pen instead of pencil. He would often mention how his notebooks were smudged with ink. Talking to him, we

realised that it wasn't just the smudging of ink that bothered him; he had difficulties sharpening pencils, cutting with scissors, etc. Hence, it was more of our need than inspiration to do something for left-handed children," says Mrs Singh.

Everyday was a problem...

A simple smudging of ink opened up a plethora of problems that left-handed people face daily. "Firstly, while writing in notebooks with gel pens, due to conventional direction of writing from left to write, left-handed children are unable to see what they are writing, along with creating a smudged handwriting. To avoid this, they tilt their hand (called hooked hand), a posture not good in the long run. Secondly, left-handers face difficulty in everyday tasks such as opening a doorknob or using scissors; these small things affect young children mentally. Also, while sitting on the same desk with a right-hander, 'elbow wars' (bumping of elbows of people using the opposite hands) are very common," informs Mrs Singh.

A journey to change began...

Speaking about the initial set-up, Mrs Singh mentions that the beginning wasn't easy. "Nobody was

into such a thing before us in India. When we were kids, if someone was left-handed, the parents would want the kids to 'switch' to being right-handed because of religious beliefs. My son's grandparents too wanted him to switch to right hand because they believed it was not 'healthy'. This lack of awareness still persists in the society," she says. While challenging societal taboos was a challenge, there was another major hurdle, "The main agenda was to bring left-handed products in India at affordable prices". A year of hard work and countless meetings later, Maped, the French based manufacturing company, agreed to be on board. "Initially, no company was ready to invest in Indian market because they were under the impression that superstitious beliefs dominated the concept of being left handed in India and hence, there were no potential buyers," she recalls. She adds on, "Another challenge was to convince them to reduce the cost, so that the products could be afforded by a regular Indian family. Thus, an affordable price range was fixed for several items such as scale, pen, pencil, etc."

Culminating in sweet success...

The most popular product from The Left Hand Shop

is the geometry set, which includes necessary stationery items, like protractor, scale, sharpener, eraser, pencil, etc., all designed solely for lefties. The metallic sharpener is designed in a way that only the pencil is to be rotated, not the sharpener, making it easier to sharpen pencils. While writing, the alignment of the left hand is such that it blocks the view of the written part. But the left-handers' gel pen, which is curved in the middle at the grip position, alleviates this problem. Similarly, the left handers' scale has markings written in a reverse order (from 15 to 0) to help them use the scale efficiently.

Spreads the melody of 'left' in joy...

"When we started our journey in 2016, our main focus was on school stationery, but now we are into kitchenettes, cricket items, and other stuff like playing cards, shirts and mugs," she shares. Talking about future plans, they plan to extend the enterprise to prime cities. With the website (www.thelefthandshop.in) in place, anyone can buy the products hassle free. Soon, they plan to set their footprints in the international market as well as make their appearance in the form of brick-and-mortar stores, all in an effort to make left 'right'. 🇮🇳

Around The WORLD

GT keeps the newswire ticking by bringing you news from around the globe



UK

Petition against lying in parliament

A petition to make lying in the House of Commons a criminal offence is nearing 1,00,000 signatures in the country as it calls for all MPs, including Ministers, to face serious penalties for "knowingly making false statements in the House of Commons, as is the case in a court of law." The Government has already responded to the petition, saying it "does not intend to introduce legislation of this nature."



GERMANY

Angela Merkel to step down

Germany's 'eternal chancellor', Angela Merkel, 67, will be stepping down this month after 16 years in power. She will become the first German Chancellor to step down entirely by choice, with a whole generation of voters never knowing another person at the top. She leaves behind a fractured political landscape, with the question of who will govern Germany next, wide open just weeks before the September 26 elections.



CANADA

Protests against anti-logging

Anti-logging protest becomes Canada's biggest ever act of civil disobedience. Members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have been tasked with enforcing the injunction, but have faced sharp criticism for their use of force, including ripping off protestors masks to pepper-spray them. Police have also faced the scrutiny of the public for obscuring their faces and not wearing name badges, and also their attempt to bar media from reporting on the long-running protest.

INDIA

PM launches Shikshak Parv

Through a video conference, the PM has inaugurated 'Shikshak Parv', organised by the Ministry of Education. The celebration started on Sept 5 and will continue till Sept 17 in recognition of the valuable contributions of teachers and to take the New Education Policy'20 a step forward. The aim behind this is to encourage innovative practices to improve the quality of education.



SRI LANKA

State of emergency

The government has declared a state of emergency in order to control the rising prices of food and to prevent hoarding, which in effect is leading to an acute shortage of food sources. Apart from this, the government also reports a foreign exchange crisis with no tourism taking place. There have been no exports too which is an added expense with several loan repayments.



JAPAN

A female face for the country

Sanae Takichi has declared that she will lead the ruling party before the general election begins. She has visioned herself to lead the Liberal Democratic Party and has put the proposal in front of the Prime Minister, Yoshihide Suga, who is the current head of the party. Citizens are excited at the prospect of a revolutionary turn in the political climate of Japan.

