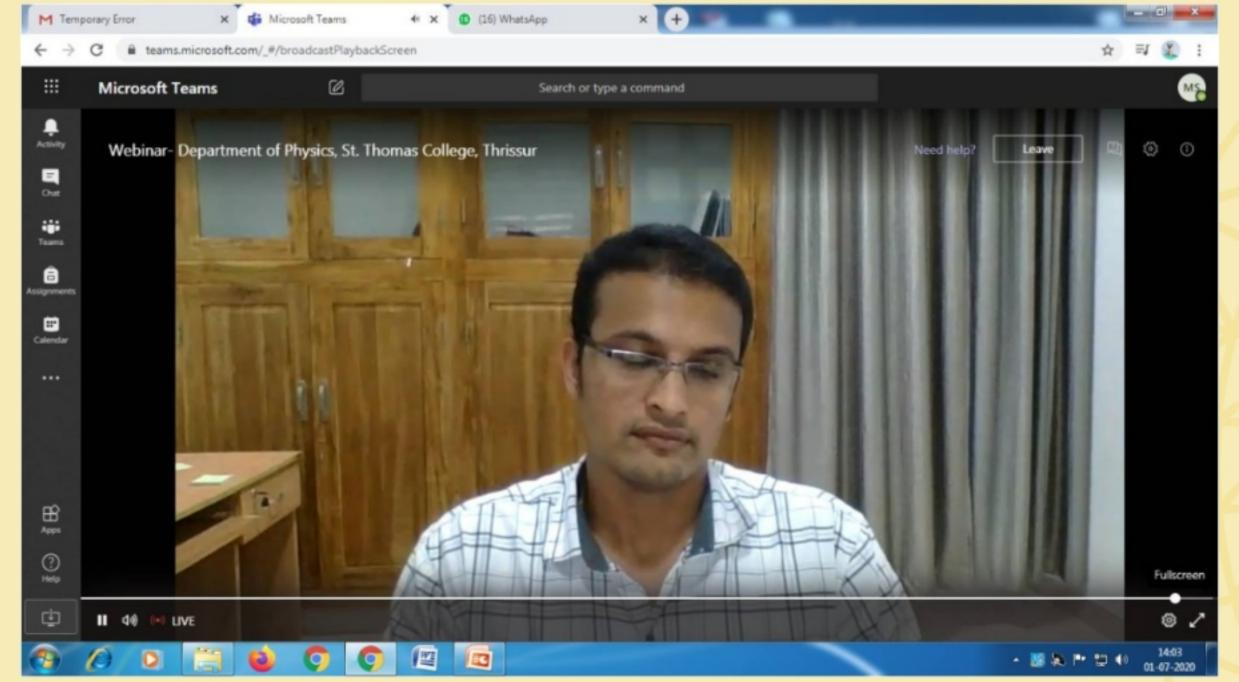
ST THOMAS'COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), THRISSUR

NEWSLETTER 01 July 2020







DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS CONDUCTED A WEBINAR ON THE TOPIC "SUPER HEAVY ELEMENTS-HOPES AND CHALLENGES TODAY. DR. E. PRASAD, DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS, CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF KERALA WAS THE RESOURCE PERSON.

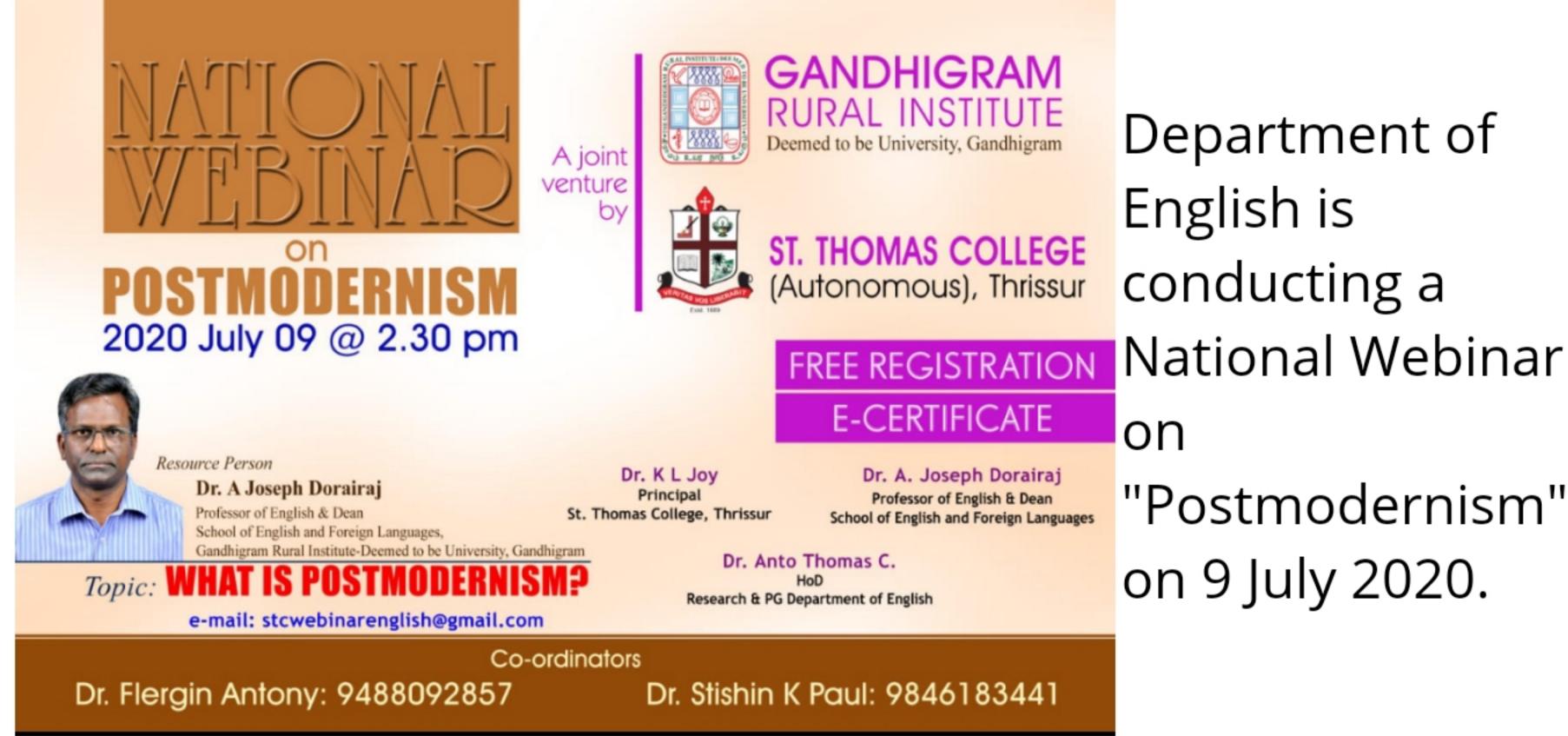
St. Thomas' Alternative Learning Cell

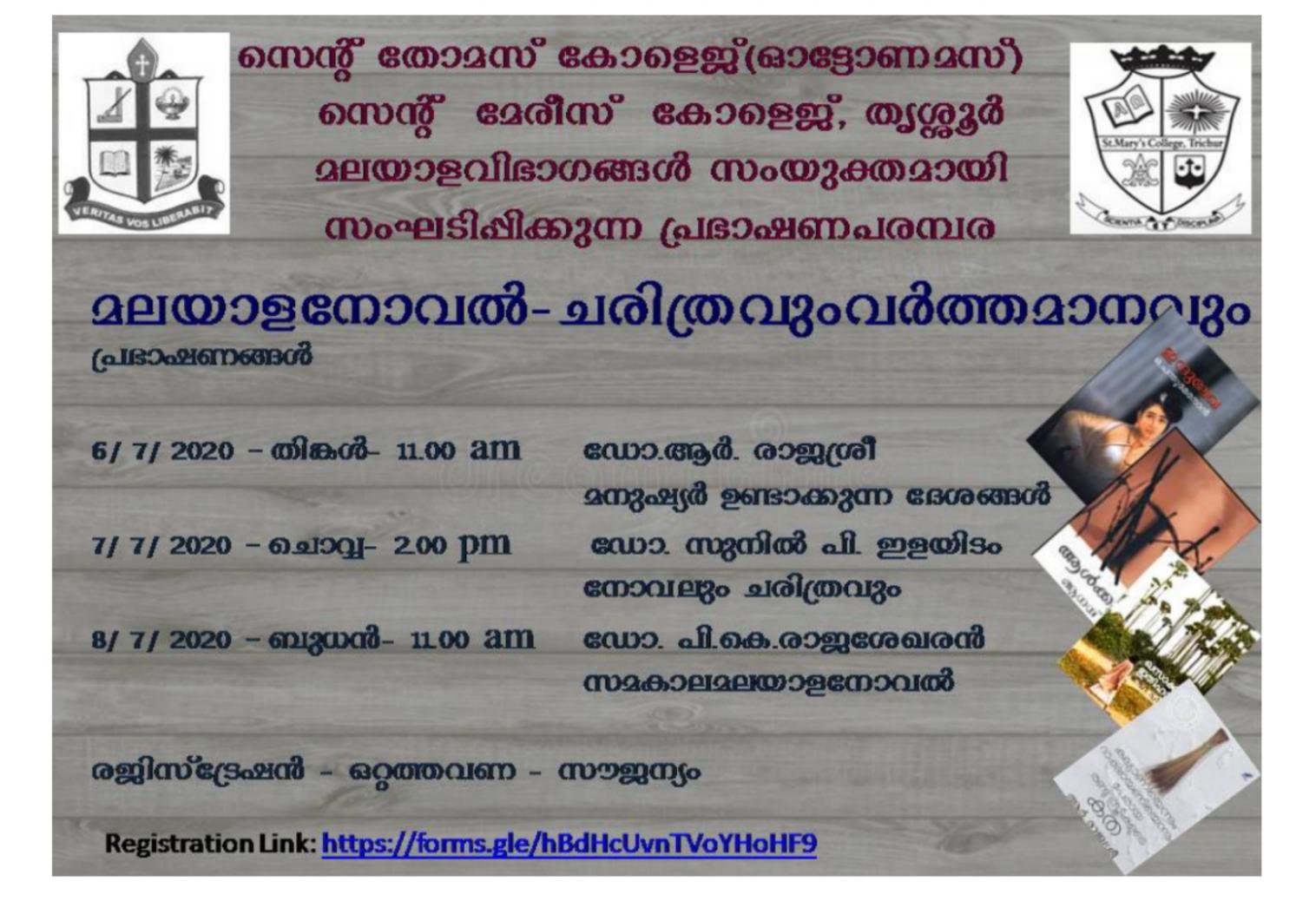
GK EveryDay (Monday to Friday)

July 01, 2020 Onwards

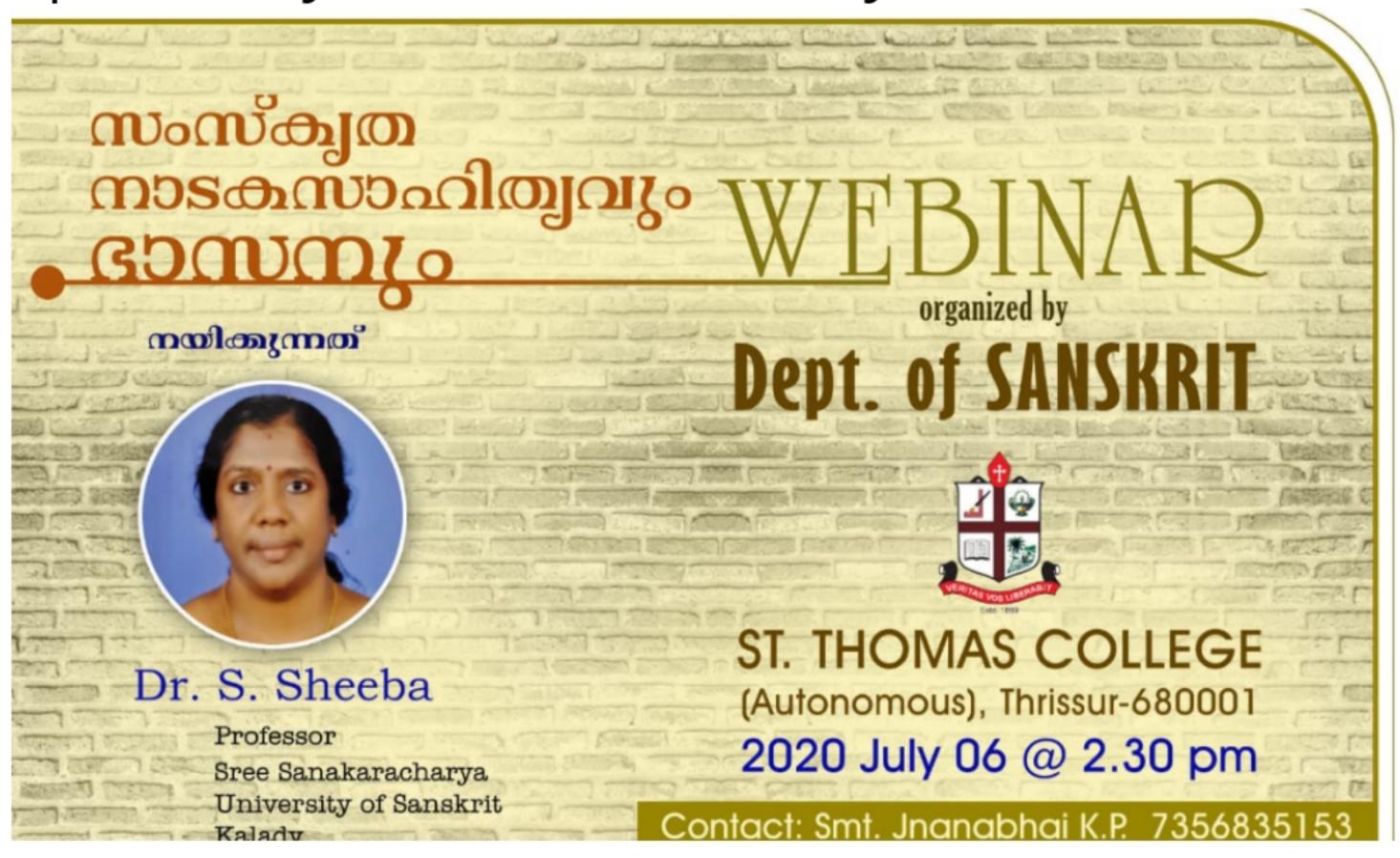
STAL Cell of St.Thomas is conducting an e-Quiz *GK Everyday* by *STAL Cell* for Students, Faculties and Research Scholars from 01-07-2020 onwards. Registration is free and to widen your horizon of knowledge fill the form and join.

https://forms.gle/DkGRo1GFgkPWKhjh6





Department of Malayalam in collaboration with St.Mary's College, Thrissur is conducting a Lecture Series on the topic "Malayalam Novel - History and Present".



Department of Sanskrit is organising a webinar on "Sanskrit Drama and Basan" on 6 July 2020.



Dr. Biju John, Depart ment of Commerce, published a research paper in Tathapi Journal with an impact factor of 5.60. Journal is indexed, peer reviewed and listed in UGC Care list.

As seen globally, there is a predominance of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) in the top ranks. In the 'Overall' category, while the score ranges from 42 to 85, there are only 13 institutions with a score above 60, and IITs and the IISc make eight of them. With the scores being highly skewed, it is really a rarefied world at the top. In the 'University' category, the scores of top 100 range from 40 to 84. But an overwhelming 65 universities have a score below 50. With this clustering of institutions at the tail, most of them miss it narrowly. Regional inequality, too, is glaring, and 42 of the top 100 universities are from three states: Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Karnataka. Similarly, 81 colleges in the top 100 are from Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Kerala. But in a winner takes everything mode, pumping resources only to the winners will widen the gulf.

As argued in an opinion piece 'Perils of Chasing Indicators' (bit.ly/2BetyXn) on NIRF 2019 in this newspaper, rankings attempt to introduce competition between institutions operating in quasi-market environments. It is laudable that the government is generating a credible benchmark through the NIRF. It is also noteworthy that it is mostly based on objective indicators. The PR parameter, which is widely criticised in rankings literature as 'reputation', is given only a small weightage of 10%.

Nevertheless, there are unintended consequences of measurement. Jerry Z Muller in his 2018 Princeton University Press book 'The Tyranny of Metrics' argues that anything that can be mea-

Often, rankings force institutions to mimic the best performing ones, albeit without any real impact. However, we need institutions with varied missions, programmes and approaches

sured and rewarded will be gamed! He mentions a school in the HBO series'The Wire'that is facing the danger of closing down if students perform poorly in English test. The school principal asks all teachers to devote the remaining time for preparing students for the test, ignoring all other subjects and activities. This strategy is euphemistically called 'curriculum alignment'. 'Teaching to the test' is one way in which institutions get perverted in reality, attempt-

ing to achieve something in letter

ELLUSTRATION: ROHNIT PHORE **EMMANUEL THOMAS** & TM JACOB Thomas is doctoral fellow, CESP, JNU; Jacob is associate professor, Nirmala College Muvattupuzha, Kerala. Views are personal **NIRF 2020** Where is

the ranking

taking us?

An India-specific ranking is helpful in the domestic context, but it isn't clear if it nudges our institutions to be globally competitive

How institutions scored, out of 100, in NIRF 2020 rankings

ple to do all the required work for ranking and that the task of the university is to provide good education. Faced by these constraints, teachers resort to low-quality research, for which the mushrooming of predatory journals in India is the living proof. In this process, colleges end up compromising on something that is difficult to measure-teach-

According to education researchers, one major factor that helps students graduate is 'student engagement'. An important aspect of this engagement is the quality of contact with faculty. In fact, it is this aspect that enriches the career of a teacher too. This is severely affected in colleges due to the above said burden on teachers.

It is certainly encouraging to see HEIs in India responding to the rankings framework. Given this response, the policymakers should innovate and modify the metrics suitably. One, there is an urgent need to modify the metric by including feedback from teachers. Students will definitely benefit by studying in institutions where teachers are happy and their job satisfaction level is high. Two, rankings on the basis of different parameters should be published. Although some data is available on the website, official publication of such rankings will help students make more informed decisions. Three, there is a need for use of 'specialisation index' in relation to publication. Currently, publication is considered at institutional level. One or two faculty members can lift the score of an institution. Four, the use of PhD as a measure of quality of faculty is fraught with serious drawbacks, for the quality of PhD varies a lot. A better indicator, at least for non-university categories, would be UGC-CSIR-NET. Five, a component metrics under the OI parameter '% of students from other States and countries' clearly favours HEIs in the metros. Six, the NIRF should increase the number of ranked institutions gradually as institutions are improving their scores. The score of 100th ranked college is 50 in 2020 compared to 35 in 2017.

Meanwhile, it is also important not to get carried away by rankings. The performance of HEIs depends crucially on the higher education system. Universitas 21 (U21), a consortium of universities, of which the Delhi University is a part of, ranks 50 higher education systems using 24 measures of performance grouped into four modules-resources, environment connectivity and output

Prof. Emmanuel Thomas, Department of **Economics** published an article titled, "Where is NIRF Ranking Taking Us?" in The Financial Express along with T M Jacob.

Entrepreneurship Development Club of St Thomas College (Autonomous), Thrissur is conducting an online quiz on Startup and Entrepreneurship. After successful submission of the quiz you will get appreciation certificate on your registered email id.

https://forms.gle/7oAtP3AmTxQiFPWZ8



Department of
Zoology is
celebrating World
Zoonoses Day 2020
with a Webinar on
"Emerging Zoonotic
Diseases". There is
also a poster
making
Competition with
the theme
"Zoonotic Diseases
- Threat to Human
Life".