



Centre for Roma Studies and Cultural Relations

ROMA NEWSLETTER

Roma: Connecting with Indian Roots

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Bulgarian Prime Minister Kiril Petkov Congratulated the Roma Community on Roma New Year

The Roma New Year in Bulgaria is celebrated every year on 14 January and the day is known as Vasilitsa, Vasilyovden, or Bango Vasil/Vasiliy / the Limping Vasil. The celebration of Vasilitsa is attached with several Roma legends. According to popular legends, St. Vasiliy saved a gypsy family from drowning in the sea. As per another legend he rebuilt the bridge, destroyed by the devil, which the Romani people used to cross over to the other side. On the occasion, Bulgarian Prime Minister greeted Roma community with good health, prosperity, and success to all Roma. He used the occasion to declare "we will work in the interest of all, regardless of their ethnicity and religion, so that Bulgaria can take a worthy place among developed and democratic countries in Europe and the world,"

Read More at

<https://www.novinite.com/articles/213247/Today+is+Bango+Vasil+-+the+Roma+Celebrate+the+New+Year?fbclid=IwAR3q1evDyUewCVROdafKKtleNmFwYCU13hNH0K0WnKj1z6L7DETxUmxfKcc>

Foreign Ambassadors Celebrate the New Year with Roma Students across Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Roma community celebrates Bango Vasil (St. Basil's Day) on 14 January that is marked as Roma New Year. On this occasion, the virtual event "Bulgaria Meet" was organized in collaboration with the Amalipe Center that is a prominent NGO and has extended support to Roma communities for over 20 years and been working with more than 270 schools throughout Bulgaria to promote education and inclusiveness. The event brought together the group of ambassadors from the embassies of Austria, Belgium,

Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, as well as UNICEF and the World Bank for a series of virtual discussions with Roma students on challenges and opportunities facing the Roma community.

Read More at

https://bg.usembassy.gov/foreign-ambassadors-celebrate-the-new-year-with-roma-students-across-bulgaria-01-14-2022/?fbclid=IwAR3lAsTD0YjSC-Dw5shAygIFGyEN_jXd_I2vKv6REAxXR-KI6PTAE_kSjAE

The Fascinating History of Coventry's Roma Community

Coventry in England is home to a thriving Roma community. The Roma came to Coventry from Romania as early as 16th century, now there is a big population of Roma in Coventry, Birmingham and London. In England Roma, Gypsy and Travellers are identified as a single group but each group is different. There is a stereotype about Roma people as being dirty or throwing things on the ground however, Coventry Roma Project offers a counter-narrative to what is normally thought about Roma families and people in Coventry.

Read More at

<https://www.coventrytelegraph.net/news/coventry-news/fascinating-history-coventrys-roma-community-22560484?fbclid=IwAR13yIhoCOL9kUjTmzinWxbyIAyQ55ChjP6KZRrY6GsTZLifeu898oHEbhs>

Scientists from the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences Awarded for their Long-term Activity in the Field of Roma Research

The prominent writers and researchers Prof. Elena Marushiakova and Prof. Veselin Popov were bestowed upon the “Romanipe Award” that is presented by Roma to non-Roma for their contribution to the research of the Roma community in Bulgaria and around the world. The award was presented by Prof. Hristo Kyuchukov. The other Roma leaders like Petar Georgiev, Rumyan Rusinov, Lilia Kovacheva attended the ceremony.

Read More at

<http://www.bta.bg/bg/c/EZ/id/2553370?fbclid=IwAR16SVHe-6lOnxPu6Ed6lNZUEBLOQdy2QRikHsmaQ6-iPnd02pG-VJUkEQA>

Romani Dance and Music: Precious Treasures of Indian

The article explores artistic similarities especially in dance and music between India and Roma. It points out Bulgarian chalga / pop-folk singers like Sofi Marinova who asserts her affinity for Indian music and defines her songs featuring the Cocek/kyuchek rhythm, that closely resembles Indian beats, produced by synthesized drum and accompanied by Tabla (in Romani language known as tarabuka) and Dafli (in Romani known as Dajre). It emphasizes the nuances of Flamenco including footwork, spins, facial expression, gaze and the movement of arms, hands and fingers which bear a resemblance to those of classical dance of Northern India such as Kathak. The article also talks about the oral musical tradition of Roma that has parallel with old musical heritage of India.

Read More at

<http://www.arspindia.org/pdf/ARSP-December-Bulletin-2021.pdf>

Roma are Encouraged to Be Vaccinated against COVID-19

The doctors, civic activists and Roma leaders conducted a campaign on the eve of the New Year holidays in the city of Tatarbunary, Odessa region of Ukraine for the vaccination against COVID-19 of all community members, especially the Roma community as they are more vulnerable to the pandemic. According to the report of international organizations, Roma families in Ukraine have been more vulnerable to the pandemic due to limited access to hygiene, clean water, electricity, and high levels of poverty. This raised the issue of vaccination against COVID-19 of the Roma community. The Public Center for Justice in Tatarbunary also appeal to Roma leaders, as well as to doctors with a proposal to explain the safety and need for vaccination.

Read More at

<https://www.prostir.ua/?news=romiv-zaklykayut-bilsh-aktyvno-vaktsynuvatys-vid-covid-19&fbclid=IwAR0bNAC9vyAOrSEZ-aX05bh5vQG3le2jztQ5dv4JK67-qRLEp6sWfNx6VMg>

The Gypsy Musical Academy Performs in the women's volleyball Italian Cup final

The Gypsy Musical Academy performed in the presence of the President of the Republic of Italy, Sergio Mattarella, at opening ceremony of the Italian Women's Volleyball Cup Final. The scene presented at the event has been taken from the famous musical-film The Greatest Showman with Hugh Jackman: "This is me" represents an anthem against all kinds of discrimination and freedom of expression in all forms. The program was meant to convey an important social message in the flagship event of Italian women's volleyball. The message was linked to the fight against all kinds of discrimination through a show with a strong

emotional and positive impact for all the public who will follow the event in sports hall and from home, in front of some of the most important institutional offices in the world of sport and politics.

Read More at

<https://www.quotidianopiemontese.it/2022/01/04/la-gypsy-musical-academy-si-esibisce-davanti-al-presidente-mattarella-per-la-finale-di-coppa-italia-di-volley-femminile/?cn-reloaded=1&fbclid=IwAR0cdNfrVyxPuP42t6xmMOy15FOeaVoyPnQwRr9dYalY-f1DGUVri9fNZs&cn-reloaded=1>