



FUN DAY TIMES



Beauty of the Ocean

Art by
Zuha Faizal (10 years)

WINNERS 
POETRY & ESSAYS
PAGES 2 & 3



EVENT
PAGE 3



LANDMARK
PAGE 4

(ONLINE)



ENVIRONMENT
PAGE 6

KIDS NEWS

PAGES 7 - 8



Please send competition entries to:
Funday Times
 C/O the Sunday Times
 P.O. Box 1136, Colombo.
 Or
 8, Hunupitiya Cross Road,
 Colombo 2.

Please note that competition entries are accepted by email.

Write the name of the competition and the date clearly at the top of your entry and include the following details:
Full Name (including Surname),
Date of Birth, Address,
Telephone No. and School.

Please underline the name most commonly used.

All competition entries should be certified by a parent or guardian as your own work.
 Competition entries without the full details requested above, will be disqualified.

Closing date for this week's competitions:
June 26, 2024

Telephone: 2479337/2479333
Email: fundaytimes1@gmail.com




Poetry Competition

This is your chance to get your poem published here. Entries should be in your handwriting and clearly certified by a teacher or parent as your own creation. Your poem should be posted to Funday Times with 'Poetry Competition' written at the top of the entry. The winner of each age category will be awarded a British Council Young Learner's Library membership.

Age groups:
6 – 10 years / 11 – 15 years
Word limit: 100 Words

6 – 10 years

Spring

As the first tulip peeks out of the soil,
 The birds sing, bluebells ring,
 The early crocuses nod in the wind,
 I feel the beginning of Spring...
 Nightingales sing lilting melodies,
 The humming birds hum, songbirds sing,
 The tits twitter, the doves coo,
 I see the beauty of Spring...
 Daffodils look weak and thin,
 Primroses don't look so pretty and prim,
 The snowdrops droop, sunflowers bloom,
 I see the end of Spring...

Kithsukhee Weerasekara
Lyceum Int. School, Yakkala

Please write the date at the top of your entry.

Please note that copied poems will be disqualified.

 
 Or
 fundaytimes1@gmail.com

11 – 15 years

Digital life

Life is a digital stage,
 World of wires and codes,
 Technology is a modern grace,
 We are drowning in a digital sea.
 We wake up into a screen,
 Day passes with status updates,
 Through feeds and stories we navigate,
 Waiting for likes and comments of our fate.
 Scrolling through the phone,
 To heed the call to fill our heart,
 Never realise the person beside me,
 and lives behind the screen.
 ZOOM never zoomed the human heart,
 INSTA took us to fake our life,
 WHATSAPP never enjoyed the moment,
 by uploading status,
 FACEBOOK never told your real story.
 Depth of valley, range of mountains,
 The digital screen took the view from us,
 Let kindness flow every time,
 Let's not forget the simple joys,
 life brings to us.

Nusaibah M. Ali Rajaei
Jeilani N.C., Balangoda

Win super books from



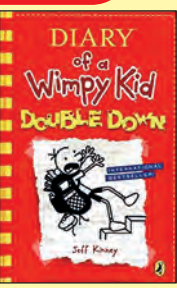
Age: 9 years and below
Word Count: 150
Topic: How I can care for my environment
Win: Super Sassy Suki's Great Escape by Shantalie Hewavisenti

Join a slightly kooky-looking dog as she takes you on a lockdown adventure across the Cape Peninsula. Super Sassy Suki introduces you to all her animal friends (and frenemies) along the way.



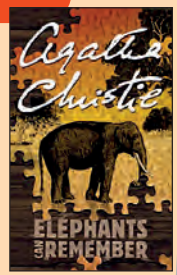
Age: 10 – 12 years
Word Count: 150 – 200
Topic: World Environment Day
Win: Diary of a Wimpy Kid – Double Down by Jeff Kinney

The pressure's really piling up on Greg Heffley. His mom thinks video games are turning his brain to mush, so she wants him to put down the controller and explore his "creative side".
 As if that's not scary enough, Halloween is just around the corner and the frights are coming at Greg from every angle.
 When he discovers a bag of gummy worms, it sparks an idea...



Age: 13 – 15 years
Word Count: 200 – 250
Topic: What you know about 'World Food Safety Day'
Win: Elephants Can Remember by Agatha Christie

Hercule Poirot stood on a cliff top where many years earlier there had been a tragic accident. This was followed by the grisly discovery of two more bodies – a husband and wife – shot dead.
 But who had killed whom? Was it a suicide pact or cold-blooded murder? Poirot delves back into the past and discovers that 'old sins leave long shadows.'



Book Competition

9 years and below
Why I love my mother
Kaveed Semasinghe
 Don Bosco English Medium School,
 Nochchiyagama

13 – 15 years
The Festival of Vesak
Hansi Millavithana
 Musaeus College, Colombo 7

Happy Birthday



Yashan Ibrahim
9 years on June 15

Photographs of members and non-members between 4 – 15 years, for the birthday page, should reach us at least ten days before the birthday, along with a letter from a parent giving full details.

A collection of stories by Quadruplets

For the first time in Sri Lanka, a collection of stories written by seven-year old quadruplets from the same family was launched.

Quadruplets, Lashen Fernando, of St. Joseph's College, Colombo, Rachel, Krishmi and Minoli Fernando of Holy Family Convent, Bambalapitiya, studying in Grade 3, presented their booklet titled 'Siv Nivun Katha Mandapaya' to Auxillary Bishops of Colombo Archdiocese Rt. Rev. Dr. Maxwell Silva, Rt. Rev. Dr. J.D. Anthony and Rt. Rev, Dr. Anton Ranjith, at Archbishop's House recently.

The booklet contains children's stories in both Sinhala and English.



9 years and below

Why I love my mother

My mother is a very important person in my life. She cooks tasty and healthy food. She encourages me in my studies.

My mother is an Executive Officer in the government sector. When she comes home I tell her about my day. She listens to me. My mother is very kind. She washes my clothes. She teaches me good manners. My mother tells me fairytales. When I become sick, she takes care of me.

I have two brothers. My mother loves our family very much. She works hard to take care of us. She likes gardening. I like to do gardening with her very much. She always helps me to stay happy with my father and brothers.

There are not enough words to tell how much my mother is important to me. She is very lovely and I know she is the best mother in this world.

I love her very much.

Kaveed Semasinghe (7 years)
Don Bosco English Medium School,
Nochchiyagama

Book Competition



13 – 15 years

The Festival of Vesak

The air is scented with the aroma of flowers. The entire world is tranquil as the world prepares for Vesak. The Festival of Vesak is the most important and sacred day for Buddhists around the world. Vesak, which is celebrated on the full moon 'Poya' day in May, commemorates the Birth, Enlightenment and Passing Away of Lord Buddha. It is a time when each and every Buddhist refrains from sin and observes 'sil'.

During Vesak, Buddhists decorate their homes with colourful lanterns, lights and Buddhist flags. The frames of these lanterns are made of bamboo and are decorated with oil paper. These lanterns are extremely pretty and eco-friendly. Another tradition during this season is to make 'Thorani'. These are structures that illustrate a 'Jathaka Kathawa'. 'Jathaka Katha' are stories

that depict the earlier lives of Lord Buddha.

To me, Vesak means much more than decorations. It is a time when Buddhists cultivate the Four Noble Truths which are loving kindness, compassion, appreciative joy and equanimity. Alms and aid are provided to anyone in need. A good example of this is 'Dansal', where people give food and drinks freely from stalls on the road. These stalls are open to anyone of any race or religion.

Sadly, in the present, our traditions are becoming scarce. We must protect these traditions for future generations. I hope that Vesak will be able to illuminate our world with kindness and compassion for thousands of years.

Hansi Millawithana
Musaeus College, Colombo 7

In our online issue this week:

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- **Page 8** – News in Pictures

Please log on to the Funday Times website on www.fundaytimes.lk or check out the Sunday Times epaper on www.sundaytimes.lk for additional pages of this week's Funday Times.

Boudhanath



Boudhanath is located 11 kilometres northeast of Kathmandu's centre. One of the largest and most significant Buddhist monuments in the world, it has stood firm on the skyline since the fifth century, commanding it with its purity and beauty. Nepal's largest spherical stupa and one of Asia's largest stupas, Boudhanath Stupa is a UNESCO World Heritage site, since 1979.



The largest of the stupas in Nepal, Boudanath Stupa forms an important part of religious tourism in the region, Boudanath Stupa is among the popular Buddhist pilgrimage sites for the devotees in the region of Nepal and Tibet. The stupa is also lovingly called 'Chorten Chenpo', meaning the "Great Tower", or "Great Stupa" and is one of the most famous Buddhist tourist destinations in the world. Boudanath Stupa is also said to house relics of the Buddha.

According to a legend, Boudanath Stupa is said to have been built by the Tibetan King, Songsten Gampo after he converted to Buddhism around 600 CE, as a form of penance. It was later in the 14th century that the stupa would see destruction at the hands of invaders leading to ruins. The current stupa that stands at the site has therefore been built in recent times.

The stupa in its design itself reminds us of Buddha's teachings towards Enlightenment, with the different parts of the stupa representing different elements of the universe, and the 13 levels of the spire symbolise the 13 stages that one must pass through before reaching the stage of Enlightenment.

Interesting Facts

- Boudhanath is a very important sacred pilgrimage site for Buddhists from all over the world.
- The pinnacle (at the top of the stupa) is the symbol of Mount Sumeru, the King of Mountains.
- The Umbrella (under the pinnacle) is the protector of the Three Jewels: Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.
- The Lotus (under the umbrella) is the symbol of compassion and purity.
- The thirteen steps (under the Lotus and above the big eyes) are the 13 steps to complete Enlightenment.
- The two eyes looking from the four sides are the Eyes of the Buddha, who sees everywhere.
- The Nose is the symbol of Nirvana.
- The Harmika is the Eight Noble Paths.
- The Dome is the symbol of universe.
- The Mandala is the mansion of Buddha.
- Boudhanath hosts many festivals throughout the year, including the Losar Festival (Tibetan New Year), Buddha Jayanti (a festival celebrating the life of Lord Buddha: his Birth, Enlightenment and Death), and the birthday of the Dalai Lama.
- You always have to walk in a clockwise direction around the stupa, with the stupa being on your right side.
- The best time for visiting Boudhanath are mornings and evenings, as you can follow the pilgrims around the stupa. In the evening, during the sunset, the atmosphere is particularly mystical.

Sources:
Buddhist Tourism &
Pariskathmandu.com

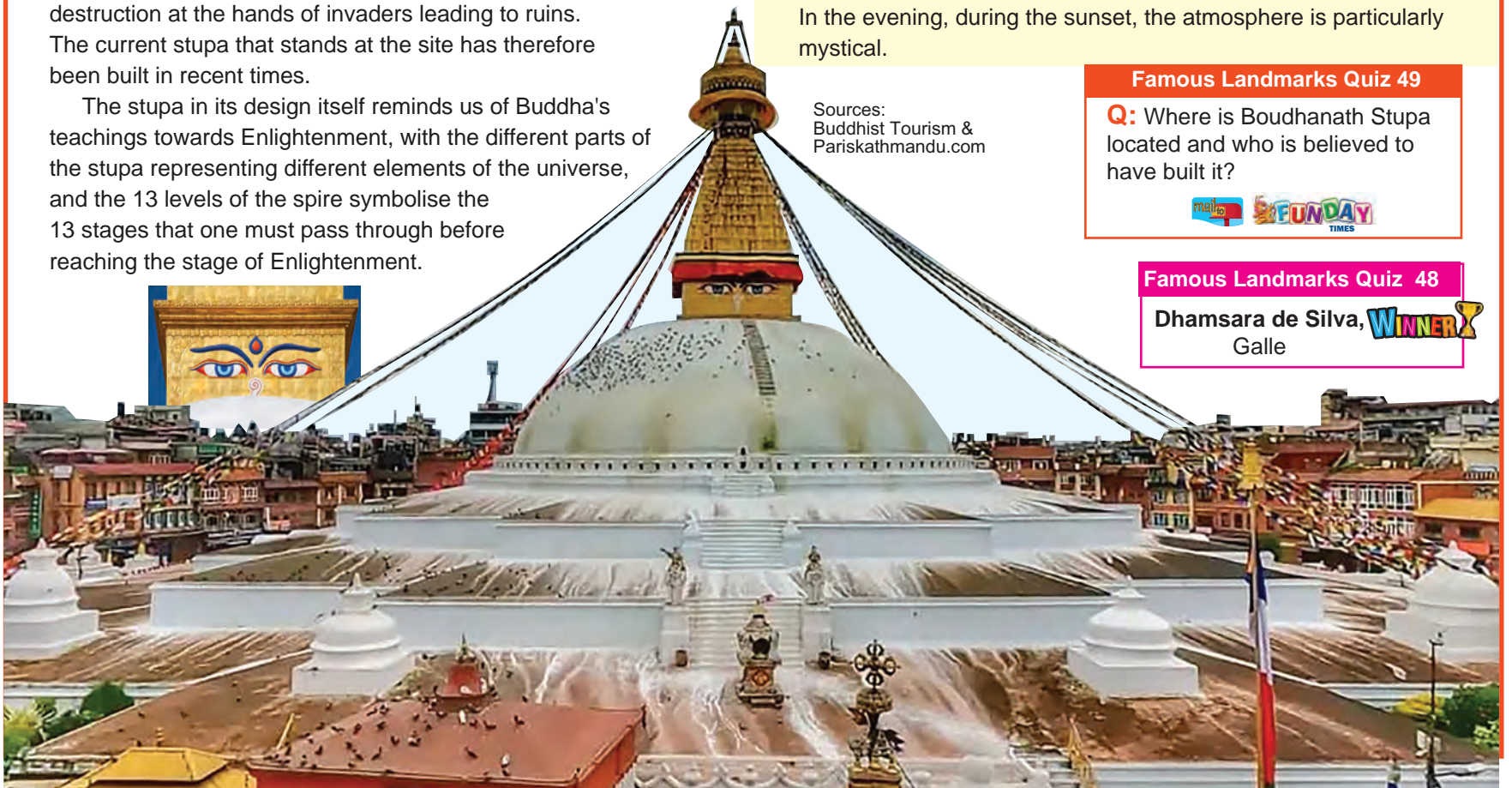
Famous Landmarks Quiz 49

Q: Where is Boudhanath Stupa located and who is believed to have built it?



Famous Landmarks Quiz 48

Dhamsara de Silva, WINNER
Galle



From a Funday Times Young Reporter

World Ocean's Day

“The Sea, the Great Unifier, is man’s only hope. Now as never before...”

This saying was by, Jacques Yves Cousteau, the discoverer of deep-sea wonders.

‘World Ocean’s Day’ is a global event celebrated to pledge support for the seven seas. Oceans Day is celebrated on June 8 yearly and is organized by the United Nations (UN) which sees this day as an opportunity to raise global awareness of the current challenges faced by the international community in connection with the sea.

To commemorate the distinctiveness of this annual programme, the UN comes up with a certain concept. The theme of the previous year was, ‘Planet Ocean: Tides Are Changing’ which gave the sense that, it is essential to remember the important role of oceans in our lives as they are the lungs of our planet, producing 50% of oxygen and absorbing 30% of carbon dioxide produced while being an essential source of food and medicine.

This year’s Action Theme is, ‘Catalysing Action For Our Ocean & Climate’ which gives the meaning, of growing the movement through transformative collaboration to create not only a healthy, blue planet but also a more just, equitable and sustainable society.

The record of Oceans Day goes back to June 8, 1999 when this event was first declared by the Rio De Janeiro Global Forum, a parallel event held at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). This provided an opportunity for Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and the civil society to express their views on environmental issues. The declaration was encouraged by an event arranged on that day by the Ocean Institute of Canada and was supported by the Canadian Government: ‘Oceans Day at Global Forum – The Blue Planet.’

This programme featured the opinions of worldwide experts, leaders and people in a position to speak for the ocean contributions to sustaining the Blue Planet. In 2004, The Ocean Project along with World Ocean Network launched ‘Help make a Difference for our Ocean Planet!’ which was a

petition which could be signed online or in-person for the UN to officially recognize June 8 as World Oceans Day. The first Oceans Day was celebrated on June 8, 2009. Blue Planet Day serves as a per annual reminder that we should emphasize the need for collective actions to protect and preserve our marine environments for future generations.

This day is celebrated over the world as it supports the implementation of Worldwide Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and fosters public interest in the protection of the ocean and the sustainable management of its resources while reminding people the important roles the ocean plays in our lives while leaving the message, “Oceans are a big part of our lives and it is time we realize their importance”. This day has been memorable by uniting people from all over, to beach clean-ups, participation of different competitions to raise awareness of this day and holding workshops that highlight the importance of marine conservation and the threats passed by pollution and climate change.

‘Trees of Emerald Sea’ by writer Brandon Sanderson, ‘A Wizard of EarthSea’ by author Ursula K. Le Guin and ‘The Ones We’re Meant To Find’ by novelist Joan He, are some chronicles written about this.

On World Oceans Day, we honour the essential contributions of our oceans to the planet’s ecological balance and human wellbeing, while highlighting the imperative for global stewardship and conservation efforts to safeguard these critical marine environments for future generations. Let’s strive to foster appreciation for the marine world, advocate for a meaningful



change and work together to ensure a healthier and a more sustainable future generation. As youth we should keep in mind to fulfill our responsibilities to the marine ecosystem by, reducing vehicle pollution, respecting habitat and conserving water.

The ocean provides more than half of oxygen, the sea is home to the largest living structure – The Great Barrier Reef, Australia and every year 8 million metric tons of plastic enter the ocean, are some interesting facts.

To conclude here is a pledge for World Ocean’s Day, “We depend on our Ocean for the Future of Life on Earth and our Ocean depends on us to heal the harm we have inflicted on Mother Earth. Let’s join our Hearts, Hands and Minds to Heal Her...”

Senuli Rathnasekara (15 years)
St. Bridget’s Convent, Colombo 7



Young Reporters

If you are interested in joining as a Funday Times Young Reporter please fill in the coupon given and send it in to us along with a recent report or interview not exceeding 300 words. Photographs or illustrations would enhance the report.



Young Reporters Coupon

Name:

Date of Birth:

Address:

.....

Telephone:

School:

Parent’s approval: Date:

.....

Young Reporters who have already enrolled with us, please send in new reports for publication.



Or



fundaytimes1@gmail.com

World Environment Day 2024

Compiled by Cecilia Hewavitharana

World Environment Day has been celebrated on June 5 every year, since 1973, with the aim of raising awareness on various environmental issues.

This year's campaign focuses on land restoration, stopping desertification, and building drought resilience, using the slogan 'Our land. Our future. We are #GenerationRestoration'.

What is desertification?

Desertification refers to the permanent degradation of land that was previously fertile, and can be caused by various factors, such as urbanisation, farming, mining, and ranching, which involve clearing away trees and vegetation, the dirt being repeatedly trampled by animals, crops extracting the soil's nutrients.

Climate change also significantly contributes to desertification by increasing



the chances of drought, heatwaves and wildfires. All of the above are contributing factors to soil erosion and the land's inability to retain water or accommodate plant life.

A thousand years are needed for 3 cm of topsoil to be created; however, soil equalling one football pitch gets eroded away every five seconds.

Why is land restoration important?

- ◆ Land degradation impacts around 40% of the world's population (3.2 billion people), with those who are least able to deal with it (e.g., rural communities, smallholder farmers, and the poor) being disproportionately affected.
- ◆ Global food production could decrease by 2030 due to land degradation, leading to a 30% increase in food prices by 2040 due to this alone – other factors could drive prices up further.
- ◆ If 15% of converted land are restored in the correct areas, 60% of species that are at risk of extinction can be saved.
- ◆ Ecosystem conservation and restoration could help fight climate change and climate-related disasters by reviving forests, peatlands, drylands, wetlands and rivers to their full capacity of storing carbon, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and absorbing disaster impacts.



United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16) to the UNCCD will be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from December 2 to 13, 2024.

TEN PRINCIPLES THAT UNDERPIN ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION



Global efforts to restore degraded landscapes

Countries have promised to restore 1 billion hectares of degraded land. At the moment, between 765 million and 1 billion hectares have been marked for restoration, of which nearly half is in sub-Saharan Africa. Significant commitments have also been made in Asia and Latin America. A landmark pact, called the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, was signed in 2022. It protects nature and includes a target that at least 30 percent of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems should be under restoration by 2030.

The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration's World Restoration Flagships honours the best examples of large-scale and long-term restoration, which embodies the 10 principles underpinning ecosystem restoration, in any region or country. This series of pioneering initiatives has already demonstrated the wide range of environmental benefits (including increased productivity, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity preservation) stemming from restoration.

Sources: un.org / unep.org / worldenvironmentday.global / decadeonrestoration.org / National Geographic

One of world's most active volcanoes erupts in Hawaii

June 4, 2024

It's happening in an area that last erupted a half-century ago, according to the US Geological Survey's Hawaiian Volcano Observatory (USGS).

Lava can be seen spewing from the Kilauea volcano. The area it's coming out of is around 0.6 miles (1 km) long.

The eruption is taking place in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. The USGS says this is a remote location, so there's no immediate danger to humans or buildings.

Why is Hawaii so volcanic?

Volcanoes have formed the long chain of islands because of the Hawaiian



One of the most active volcanoes in the world began erupting on Monday in Hawaii.

hot spot, made of super-heated material deep in the earth.

Heat from this material rises, eventually melting rock into magma.

The magma then continues to rise. When some of it pushes its way to the surface, a volcanic eruption takes place.

Kilauea and Mauna Loa are the most active.

Research over the past few decades shows that Kilauea has its own magma-plumbing system, extending to the surface from around 3 miles (60 km) deep in the earth.

According to the USGS, Kilauea is the home of Pele, the Hawaiian volcano goddess.

Hawaiian chants and oral traditions from hundreds of years ago tell of its eruptions.

Mexico elects its first female president

June 3, 2024

Mexico has elected its first ever female president.

Claudia Sheinbaum will take over from the previous president, Andrés Manuel, on October 1.

Vote counting hasn't officially ended, but Mexico's electoral authority says the early results show Sheinbaum winning with around 60% of the vote.

Who is Claudia Sheinbaum?

Before she ran for president, Claudia Sheinbaum used to be the mayor of Mexico City.

This is a big and important role for politicians in Mexico. It's the biggest city in the country, with a population of over 9 million – nearly a million more than London.

She stepped down from her job as mayor in 2023 to start her campaign to be president.

She got into politics because of her career as a scientist. She used to work as an energy engineer, then became Mexico City's environment secretary.

What else did people in Mexico vote for?

Voters also got to choose their congress, which is made up of 628 members. Congress makes and votes on political decisions.

People in Mexico also voted for thousands of local officials, who will represent people all over the country, and for the head of Mexico City's government.



Claudia Sheinbaum told people in Mexico, "I won't fail you".



Source : CBC Newsround

June 4

News in Pictures



Varanasi, India
Supporters of Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister and Bharatiya Janata Party leader, celebrate Indian election results.



Mexico City, Mexico
Supporters cheer as they wait for Claudia Sheinbaum after her landslide triumph in the presidential election.



Washington DC, USA
An image from House Television shows Republican John Rose speaking on the floor of the House of Representatives as his son Guy makes a face.



Weymouth, UK
Morris dancers perform at the Wessex Folk Festival. The event is one of the biggest free events in the UK, held on the picturesque harbourside.



Nairobi, Kenya
Families whose homes were demolished by the government after recent floods. The Kenyan government has begun demolishing risky structures in the Mathare slum on the banks of the river in the city.

Carti Sugtupu, Panama
Authorities handed over keys to new homes on the mainland to about 300 families from Carti Sugtupu, a small Caribbean island affected by rising sea levels. They will become Panama's first climate-displaced people.



June 2



Duxford, UK
Round canopy parachutists prepare to be loaded on a Douglas C47 Dakota aircraft before a jump in Normandy. The jump is part of the D-day commemorations in France on June 6. This year marks the 80th anniversary of D-day landings, when allied forces invaded German-controlled France. It was the largest seaborne invasion in history.

Bungko, Indonesia
A worker harvests salt from seawater in a greenhouse, which allows year-round production and produces a higher quality without dust and rainwater inclusions in West Java.



Vilnius, Lithuania
People ride inflatable animals on a water slide into a giant fake soup bowl during the Pink Soup Fest. Cold beetroot soup is a traditional Lithuanian dish usually served in summer. Vilnius Pink Soup Fest is being held this year for the second time and kickstarts the summer in the city.

Source : The Guardian