

the
**SUNDAY
TIMES**

SUNDAY
JANUARY 12, 2025



FUN DAY

TIMES



Youngster working in a paddy field

Pic. by Kushan Pathiraja

WINNERS 

POETRY & ESSAYS
PAGES 2 & 5



MATHS
PAGE 3



LANDMARKS
PAGE 4

(ONLINE)



ANIMALS
PAGE 6

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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 Number 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:

January 29, 2025

Telephone: 2479337/2479333

Email: fundaytimes1@gmail.com



Age groups:

6 – 10 years / 11 – 15 years

Word limit: 100 Words

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.

6 – 10 years

Birthday fun

Birthdays are fun,
Never glum,
Go there with an empty stomach,
Come back with a full one.

Birthdays are fun,
Never glum,
When your tum goes grum,
Just simply say yum.

Birthdays are fun,
Never glum,
Too much gifts will come,
Enjoy the food,
Enjoy the party,
But most importantly have fun.

Anuki Waduge
Ladies' College, Colombo

11 – 15 years

Ode to Palestine

Palestine; the land of stories untold,
A place so warm, yet the night feels cold,
People stand strong, through the pain they bear,
Fighting for freedom, a life that is fair.

Children play games in streets worn down,
Laughing and smiling in a broken town.

Dreams of peace they hold so tight,
Hoping for calm in each long night,
Holding their hopes with nowhere to hide.

One day they'll roam free, strong and tall,
No more fear, no more walls at all.

For there will emerge a day where we'll all see,
'From the river to the sea Palestine will be free.'

Ruzaiq Junkeer
Carey College, Colombo



or

fundaytimes1@gmail.com

Please write the date at the top of your entry.

Please note that copied poems will be disqualified.

Age: 10 – 12 years

Word Count: 150 – 200

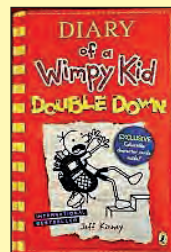
Topic: Resolutions you have made for 2025

Win: Diary of a Wimpy Kid – Double Down by Jeff Kinney

The pressure's piling up on Greg Heffley. His mom thinks video games are turning his brain to mush, so she wants him to put down his controller and explore his creative side.

As if that's not scary enough, Halloween is just round the corner and frights are coming at Greg at every angle. When he discovers a bag of gummy worms, it sparks an idea.

Can Greg get his mom off his back by making a move... Or will his plan just double Greg's troubles?



Age: 13 – 15 years

Word Count: 200 – 250

Topic: Spending New Year's Eve with friends and family

Win: After the Funeral by Agatha Christie

Though tragedy had touched the life of the wealthy Richard Abernethie, his sudden death seemed pretty unremarkable for a man of his age. So why would his sister wait until his funeral to say he had been murdered?

When she is savagely killed the next day, her extraordinary remark suddenly takes a chilling significance. The family solicitor turns to Hercule Poirot to unravel the mystery...



Win super books from



Age: 9 years and below

Word Count: 150

Topic: How you saw the New Year in

Win: Three Cheers, Secret Seven by Enid Blyton

When Peter and Jack go looking for their lost model aeroplane in an old abandoned house, they find a surprise. Who is living there and why?

It's time for the Secret Seven to investigate!



Write at the top of your Essay

■ **Book Competition** ■ **Essay Topic**



Book Competition



9 years and below

My best Christmas gift

Chenuidi Gayathma

Hiyare East College, Galle

10 – 12 years

Christmas Eve with family and friends

Ramiru Thissera

D. S. Senanayake College, Colombo

13 – 15 years

My wish for Christmas

Anjana Vasanthakumar

Saiva Mangaiyar

Vidyalayam, Colombo

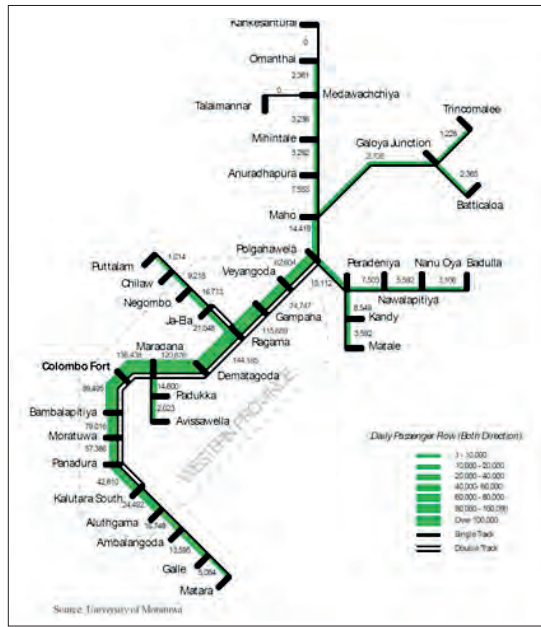
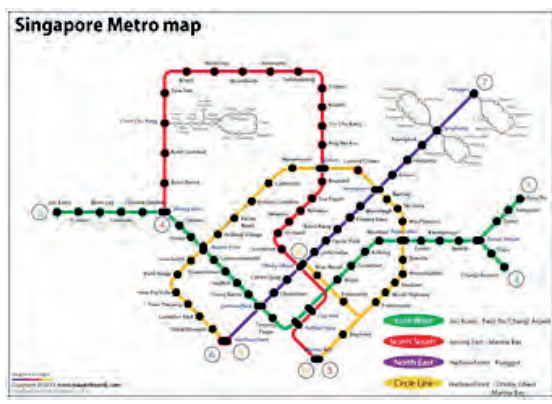
Maths in Action 88
By R. N. A. de Silva

Bus and Train Route Maps 

If you look at a bus or a train map (we can call them subway maps), you will observe that they consist of straight lines and gentle curves. However, buses and trains rarely travel along straight paths. You might also notice that the distances between stations are not drawn to a scale. Still these subway maps help us to navigate from one place to another although it leaves out many important information such as turns and distances.

These subway maps are drawn using a mathematical field called 'topology'. Topology deals with how shapes change when they are stretched, shrunken or distorted but not cut or glued. For this reason, topology is sometimes referred to as rubber sheet geometry. If a rectangle is drawn on a rubber sheet and stretched, the lengths of sides are changed but points inside and outside the rectangle remain as they are. Topology studies properties of spaces that are invariant under deformation.

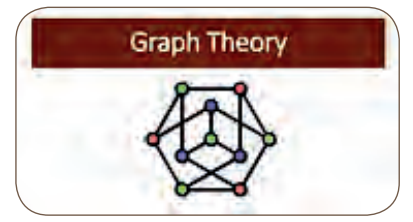
The subway maps are drawn using a branch of topology known as 'graph theory'. Consider the train map of Singapore as an example.



In this graph, the stations are called "vertices" and the lines joining them are called "edges". Distances and directions are distorted to bring out simplicity and clarity. The idea is to make things simple for travellers to know where they are and where they wish to go.

Topology and graph theory originates around the 18th century with the contributions of Swiss mathematician Leonhard Euler. But it was in 1929, that a rail transport network was presented in the form of a graph. This was done by George Dow who was an employee of the London and North Eastern Railway system. A subway map is topological transformation of the physical subway path.

So, the next time you look at a subway map, appreciate the mathematics behind it that has made our journeys so easy to traverse.



Math Plot - 88

Try to find the solution to the following puzzle. You may send solutions with reasoning to rnades@gmail.com within the next three days. Please include your full name, date of birth, home address, contact details and the name of your school along with the solution.

You have a basket containing eight apples. You have eight friends and you give each of your friends one apple. Now all your friends have one apple each, yet there is an apple remaining in the basket. How?

Math Plot 87 – Solution

The answer is 5.

The winner is **Rithmi Seneviratne of Southlands College, Galle.** Congratulations!

Happy Birthday



William Borham
5 years on December 29, 2024

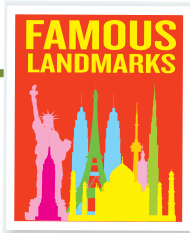


Eshal Borham
14 years on December 28, 2024

In our online issue this week:

- **Page 5** – Book Winners' Essays
- **Page 6** – Animals
- **Page 7** – Kids News
- **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.



Yosemite National Park



Yosemite National Park

Yosemite National Park is located in central California, about 140 miles (225 kilometres) east of the city of San Francisco. It is known for its imposing granite mountains and for its many waterfalls. The park was established in 1890.

Geography

Yosemite is part of the western slope of the Sierra Nevada mountain range. The park is centered on a large valley that was carved out of the mountains by the movement of glaciers over thousands of years. Two glaciers still exist in the park.

The park has also been shaped by rock falls. These happen when chunks of granite fall off the side of the cliffs. Hundreds of rock falls have occurred in the past 150 years, and they continue today. In March 2009, a large pile of rocks knocked down hundreds of trees and buried part of one of the trails.

There are many different plants in the park. At the lowest elevations are scattered trees, shrubs and meadows that fill with wildflowers in spring. At the level of Yosemite Valley, which is about 4,000 feet (1,200 metres) above sea level, large stands of evergreen trees grow. These include groves of giant sequoias. Higher up are mountain hemlocks and lodgepole pines. Animal life includes mule deer, various squirrels, chipmunks and black bears.

Park Features

The glaciers that carved out Yosemite Valley left behind huge granite domes and peaks. The two largest are Half Dome, which towers some 4,800 feet (1,460 m) above the valley floor, and El Capitan (the world's largest granite face) at 3,600 feet (1,100 m) from the valley floor. The Merced River flows over some of the peaks to create spectacular waterfalls, including Vernal and Nevada Falls. Other streams and creeks form Yosemite and Bridalveil Falls as well as many others. Yosemite Falls is the tallest waterfall in North America. It drops 2,425 feet (739 m).

Thousands of people come to Yosemite every year to camp, bike and hike the park's many trails. Many of the most popular sites are in Yosemite Valley.



Yosemite Falls ▲

History

The first people to settle in the Yosemite area were Native Americans who called themselves the Ahwahneechee. They were part of the Miwok group of Indians. In the late

1840s, they faced conflict with Europeans who came to the Sierras in search of gold. In 1851, a group chasing the Ahwahneechee became the first Europeans to see Yosemite Valley. Their stories about the beauty of the valley led others to the area.

Soon large numbers of people were travelling to Yosemite. Some people were afraid that they would harm the landscape, so they began the effort to protect the land. Part of the area became a state park in 1864. In 1890, the national park was created. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) designated Yosemite National Park a World Heritage site in 1984.

Source: Britannica Kids



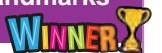
El Capitan ▲

Famous Landmarks Quiz 56

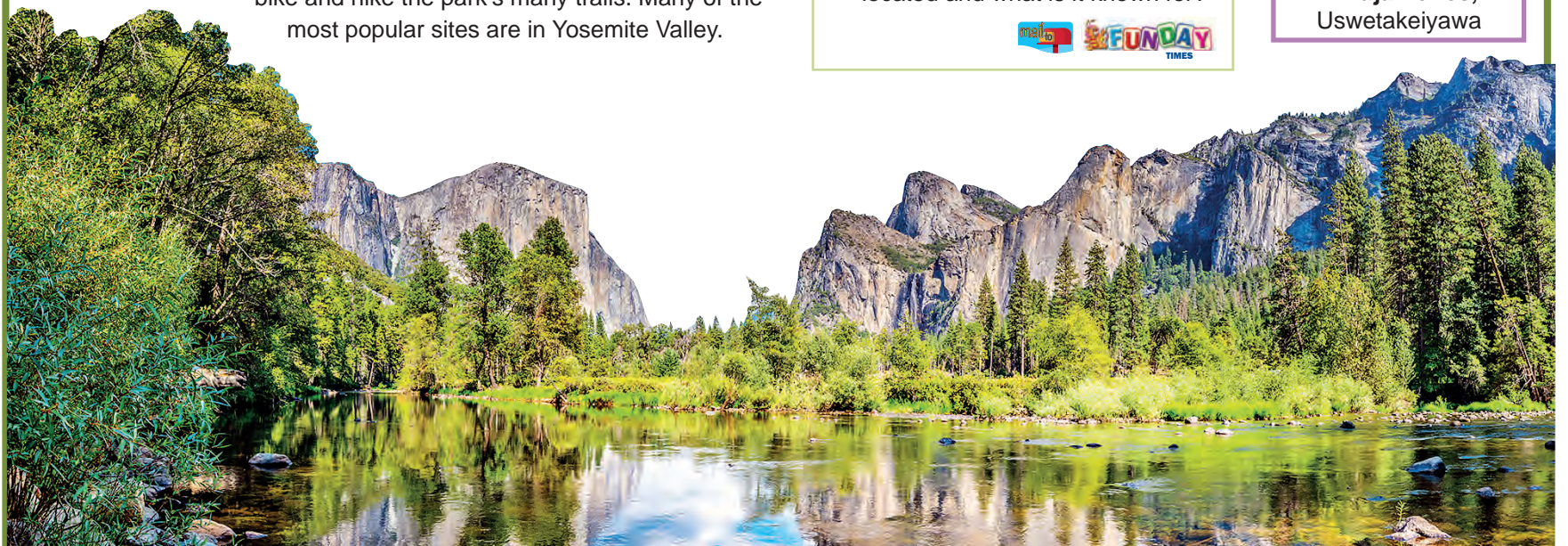
Q: Where is Yosemite National Park located and what is it known for?



Famous Landmarks Quiz 55



Dinuja Peries,
Uswetakeiyawa



Book Competition



9 years and below

My best Christmas gift

This Christmas, my best gift was a big doll from my father. I was so happy when I opened it! She has a pretty red dress and shiny eyes. She is so cute!

I named her 'Chuty' because she is sweet. When I look at Chuty, I think of my father and how much he loves our family. This doll makes me so happy.

I play with Chuty every day. I hug her and give her kisses. She is my best friend. I like to put her to bed and talk to her. She makes me smile.

I love my doll Chuty so much. I will keep her forever and play with her all the time. This is the best Christmas gift ever. Thank you Father!

Chenudi Gayathma (8 years)
Hiyare East College, Galle

10 – 12 years

Christmas Eve with family and friends

Christmas Eve is one of the magical nights at the end of the year. It is a night that feels everything is special because of the colourful lights, food, clothes etc. I think Christmas Eve creates valuable memories.

I decorated our huge Christmas tree in our living room with the help of my father. My mother started to prepare food for my friends and our family. My friends began to arrive and I saw delicious bites and colourful gifts in their hands. After everyone arrived, the living room was too noisy but that was a special feeling for me.

One of my favourite parts on Christmas Eve is sitting at the dinner table. There was so much food, golden roasted chicken, warm bread rolls, mashed potatoes and vegetables. My friends shared funny stories.

After dinner we exchanged gifts with each other. At night, we drank cups of cocoa. After that we played Christmas games and sang Christmas carols. It was a special night with my friends and family.

Ramiru Thissera (11 years)
D. S. Senanayake College,
Colombo

13 – 15 years

My wish for Christmas

Christmas is one of the wonderful times of the year, filled with happiness and festivities. It's not just about the gifts or decorating the tree, it's about sharing our holiday spirit and cheer.

This year, my wish for Christmas is to enjoy every moment of the festivities with my loved ones and share the holiday spirit with those in need.

We create many beautiful memories each year. My elder sister and I enjoy decorating the Christmas

tree, hanging shiny ornaments and the golden star on the top. My father and I go on a special trip to pick out the perfect tree, my mother and I enjoy choosing ornaments to make it extra special. One of my favourite traditions is building a gingerbread house with my sister. It's messy, fun and always filled with laughter.

While I cherish these moments with my family, I believe that we should spread the Christmas joy with others. I always love helping others and this year, I wish to spread the

Christmas spirit to those who may not have the same opportunities to celebrate - whether it's sharing treats, helping decorate or simply offering kindness.

My Christmas wish is to spread the Christmas joy and kindness. May this season bring happiness and warmth to everyone.

I wish you a Merry Christmas!

Anjana Vasanthakumar (15 years)
Saiva Mangaiyar Vidyalayam,
Colombo



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



Or



fundaytimes1@gmail.com



Young Reporters Coupon

Name:

Date of Birth:

Address:

.....

Telephone:

School:

Parent's approval: Date:

.....

Loggerhead Sea Turtle

A female loggerhead sea turtle may travel thousands of miles to return to the beach where she hatched as a baby to lay her own eggs as an adult.

The largest of all hard-shelled turtles, the beautifully coloured loggerhead sea turtle got its name because its oversized head looks like a big log.

Within their heads are powerful jaws, which loggerheads use for crushing prey like conchs, horseshoe crabs and other animals with hard shells. These carnivores also eat softer foods like jellyfish and fish. Occasionally they munch on seaweed and sargassum – a brown algae, but not often enough for experts to classify them as omnivores.

Loggerheads are migratory turtles and live in oceans all over the world, except in the coldest seas. There are more loggerheads in the waters of the United States of America, than any other species of sea turtle.

Their reddish-brown shell, or carapace, is heart-shaped. Their front flippers propel them through the water like wings, and their hind feet stabilize and steer them.

While adults males generally weigh about 250 pounds, loggerheads of more than a thousand pounds have been found.

The Loggerhead is considered a “keystone species,” meaning that other animals in its ecosystem depend on it for survival. These turtles feed on invertebrates, whose shells pass through their digestive systems and upon excretion, fall back to the bottom of the ocean for other animals to eat as a calcium source.



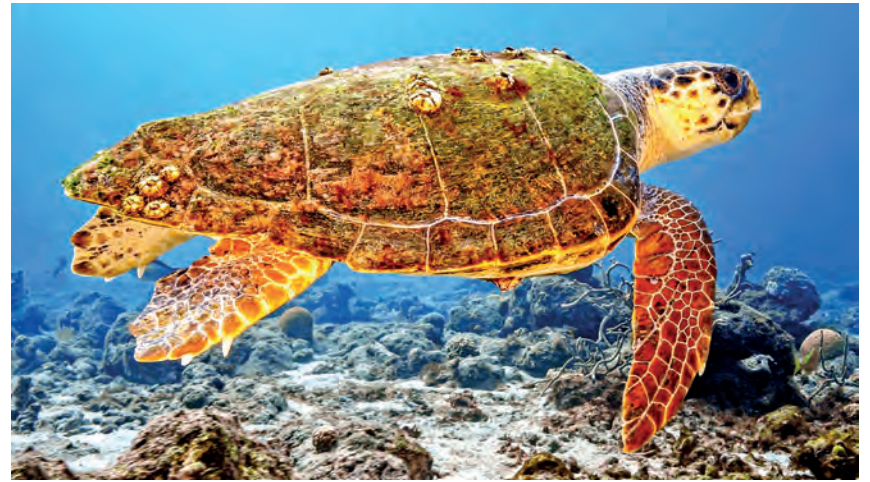
Source : National Geographic Kids

Predators also rely on loggerhead hatchlings for food, while more than a hundred species of animals – including barnacles, crabs and algae – live on their shells.

A loggerhead female generally nests every two to three years. On average, she'll lay eggs four times in one nesting season. Each time, she comes ashore and uses her front flippers to clear a spot in dry sand. Then she uses her hind flippers to dig her nesting hole and gently lay her eggs.

Those that remain undisturbed, hatch about 60 days later.

Hatchlings dig their way up through the sand toward the surface and wait just underneath the last layer of sand until nightfall.



COMMON NAME: Loggerhead sea turtles

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Caretta caretta*

TYPE: Reptiles

DIET: Carnivore

GROUP NAME: Flotilla

SIZE: 36 inches

WEIGHT: 253 pounds



After spending two months inside an egg, a tiny loggerhead sea turtle hatches before heading to the ocean.



A loggerhead sea turtle can live to be more than 50 years old in the wild.



Once cooler temperatures signal that the sun has set, the hatchlings pop the rest of the way out and scurry toward the ocean avoiding raccoons, crabs, birds and other predators.

Honouring former US President Jimmy Carter

January 7, 2025

Jimmy Carter, the 39th president of the United States, died on December 29, 2024 at the age of 100.

Mr. Carter served one term as president, but is probably best known for the work he did after leaving office. He will be honoured by the nation with a special service on Thursday.

James Earl Carter Jr. was born on October 1, 1924. He grew up in Plains, Georgia, where his father was a peanut farmer. He graduated from the US Naval Academy, and served on a Navy submarine during World War II.

In 1946, Mr. Carter married Rosalynn Smith. The couple remained married



until Rosalynn died in November 2023.

After his time in the Navy, Mr. Carter returned to Georgia, where he took over the family's peanut farm. He also began to get involved in local politics.

In 1962 he was elected to the Georgia State Senate. In 1970, Mr. Carter was elected governor of Georgia.

In 1976, Mr. Carter ran for president, promising to bring honesty and fairness to the White House. He won the election, defeating Gerald Ford.

Jimmy Carter was president from 1977 to 1981. During his time in office, Mr. Carter worked hard to bring peace to the Middle East, ending a long-running war between Israel and Egypt. He also helped create the Department of Education and the Department of Energy.

NewsForKids

Millions of bats gather in largest mammal migration on earth

January 6, 2025

Kasanka National Park in Zambia, Africa, is home to an unlikely natural phenomenon – the world's largest mammal migration. Each year, from October to December, millions of straw-coloured fruit bats from across Africa converge on this evergreen swamp forest. These nocturnal mammals spend their nights feasting on wild fruits in the surrounding farmlands and their days resting in the forest. This cycle continues daily until January when the bats disperse and return to their respective habitats across the continent.



Millions of straw-coloured fruit bats migrate to Zambia each year.



The bats spend three months feasting on fruits in Zambia.

“Every year, we witness the arrival of about 12 million fruit bats. It’s a sight to behold as they emerge from the trees in a swirling mass, creating a living cloud that stretches across the horizon,” said Simon Siame, a tour guide at Kasanka.

Researchers are unsure why the bats choose Kasanka, the smallest of 20 national parks in Zambia, for their annual migration. It is not for breeding, as the bats are known to mate in other African countries, such as Mozambique and Tanzania.

The reason the bats migrate to Kasanka may never be known. However, the ecological importance of their journey is undeniable. As they fly, these mammals disperse fruit seeds across miles of land, helping to maintain the health and diversity of many ecosystems.

DOGO News

January 7

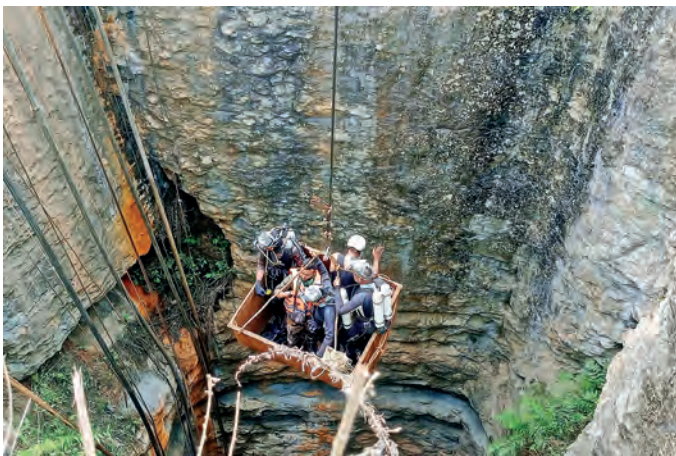
News in Pictures



Gaza City, Gaza
A family prepares for the Christmas morning service at Saint Porphyrius, a Greek Orthodox church.



La Paz, Bolivia
A woman holds dolls depicting Jesus as thousands of parishioners celebrate Three Kings' Day by taking such dolls and images to Catholic churches to ask for peace and health in the New Year.



Istanbul, Turkey
Greek Orthodox faithfuls retrieve a wooden crucifix as they swim in the Golden Horn during Epiphany Day celebrations.



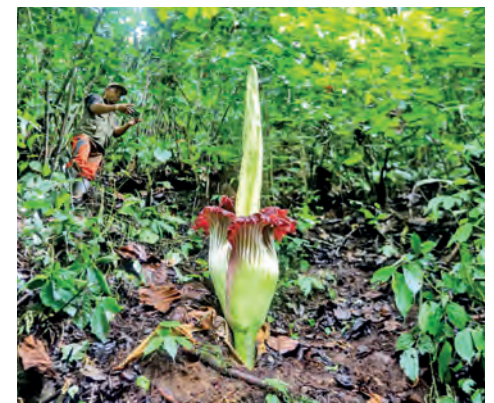
Assam, India
Divers use a pulley to enter a coal mine to rescue trapped miners in Umrangso, a remote area in the northeastern state of Assam.



Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Ethiopian Orthodox faithful hold candles during the Melody of Myriads worship session at the Bole Medhanialem Cathedral Orthodox church to mark the Ethiopian Christmas Eve.



Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Metropolitan Hrizostom puts a dried oak in fire at the Church of the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel marking Christmas Eve with a tradition of burning dried oak branches, symbolising the Yule log.



West Sumatra, Indonesia
A Titan arum flower blooms in Palupuah Forest. The plant, which has a spike called a spadix that stands up to 3 metres tall, warms up to 36°C at night and gives off a strong smell that led to its nickname, 'corpse flower'.

Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany
Competitors ride their wooden sledge during the traditional Bavarian horn sledge race 'Hornschlittenrennen' in Garmisch-Partenkirchen.



Saudi Arabia
Orlen Jipocar Team's Martin Prokop and Viktor Chytka in action during Stage 2 of the Dakar Rally.

Sources: Reuters & The Guardian