



# FUN DAY

## TIMES



**Kids having fun at Galle Lit Fest 2025**

Pic. by M. A. Pushpa Kumara



**EVENT** 

PAGES 2 & 3



**COMPETITIONS**

PAGES 4 & 5

**(ONLINE)**



**REPORT**

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 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:**

**March 5, 2025**

**Telephone: 2479337/2479333**

**Email: [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)**



**In our online issue  
this week:**

- **Page 5** – Competitions
- **Page 6** – Young Reporter
- **Page 7** – Kids' News
- **Page 8** – News in Pictures

Please log on to the  
Funday Times website on  
[www.fundaytimes.lk](http://www.fundaytimes.lk)  
or check out the  
Sunday Times epaper on  
[www.sundaytimes.lk](http://www.sundaytimes.lk)  
for additional pages  
of this week's Funday Times.

## Stories, creativity and fun

By Dilushi Wijesinghe

The children's segment of the Galle Literary Festival (GLF) held on February 8, at the Martin Wickramasinghe Folk Museum was a vibrant celebration of storytelling, creativity and imagination. With activities ranging from interactive storytelling and drama performances to art, music and poetry, the festival offered something for every young mind.

Here's a look at the highlights:

The youngest festival-goers (ages 2 - 5) kicked off their day with 'What Makes You Smile?' a joyful session led by early learning specialist Shanya Perera and origami artist Shazad Synon. Packed with storytelling, puppetry, a lively 'Smile Safari' and creative crafts, the children were fully engaged, their faces lighting up with every new adventure.

For six to eight year-olds, the festival offered a range of activities to spark curiosity and creativity.

'Sai's Magic Silk', author Shyala Smith enchanted young listeners with the tale of Sai, a child whose mother's colourful saris transformed into magical portals. Shyala also shared insights on how picture books are created, inspiring many to imagine their own stories.

In 'Mary Anning's Growsome Beasts', actors Tehani Chitty and Tracy Jayasinghe brought the story of 19<sup>th</sup> century paleontologist Mary Anning to life. Children learned about her discovery of the world's first Ichthyosaur fossil and the challenges she faced as a pioneering woman in science.

'Building Worlds', led by Tehani Chitty, encouraged children to create their own fantastical spaces through playful storytelling activities.

Meanwhile, 'My Little Handbook of Feelings', author Artika Bakshi guided children to explore and express their emotions through creative exercises.



**'What Makes You Smile?'**



**'Sai's Magic Silk'**



**'My Little Handbook of Feelings'**



# at the Galle Literary Festival



Nature lovers were captivated by 'The Optimistic Kingfisher', where author Chris Devonshire Ellis shared stories inspired by Sri Lanka's wildlife, encouraging kids to find inspiration in nature. The session ended on a high note, with each child receiving a signed copy of the book and a commemorative t-shirt.

Art took centre stage in 'What's Your Cartoon Character?' as animator Irushi Tennekoon guided kids through fun drawing exercises. With music playing in the background, children re-imagined themselves as animals, astronauts and more.

For budding poets, 'Haikus and Haigas' with Tracy Holsinger introduced the beauty of

traditional Japanese poetry. Participants crafted haikus and paired them with delicate haiga illustrations inspired by nature.

Children ages 12 and above, enjoyed advanced workshops designed to deepen their creative expression. In a songwriting session led by composer Justin Whyte, teens learned to craft meaningful lyrics and melodies. They also made comics with illustrator Irushi Tennekoon who introduced the fundamentals of comic art, from panels and expressions to pacing and dialogue. By the end, many had created their own four-panel comics.

The day wrapped up with an energetic Literary Quiz and Poetry Slam, hosted by Vehara Abeygunawardane. Teams competed in a lively quiz, while young writers performed original poems.

**'Mary Anning's Grewsome Beasts'**



**Songwriting workshop**



**'The Optimistic Kingfisher'**



**'What's Your Cartoon Character?'**

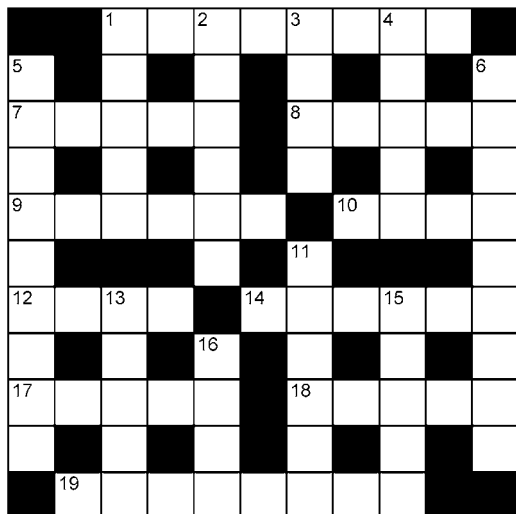


**'Haikus and Haigas'**

Pix by M. A. Pushpa Kumara and Dilushi Wijesinghe



**LUMALA Crossword – No. 6**



- |                         |                              |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Across</b>           | <b>Down</b>                  |
| 1 A prickly animal      | 1 An eye colour              |
| 7 Shave with this thing | 2 With less light            |
| 8 One of your senses    | 3 Simple to do               |
| 9 Divided exactly       | 4 A keyboard instrument      |
| 10 One time             | 5 A big group of musicians   |
| 12 Exchange for money   | 6 Tried                      |
| 14 Face paint           | 11 A type of nut from a tree |
| 17 Someone on a horse   | 13 A large serving spoon     |
| 18 Poke with your elbow | 15 Finished                  |
| 19 Beaten at war        | 16 Costing nothing           |

**LUMALA BICYCLE COMPETITION**

You now have a chance to win a brand new **LUMALA bicycle** for your own. One lucky winner will receive a brand new Lumala bicycle each month. All you have to do is fill in the Lumala Crossword No. 6, according to the clues given. Write the answers neatly on a postcard or paper, and send it to **Funday Times**. Cut the strip 'LUMALA Crossword No. 6' seen at the top of the page and paste it on your entry.

**Age Group: 8 – 15 years**

*Closing Date: February 26, 2025*

Entries should be certified as your own work by a teacher or parent.

**Solution No. 5**



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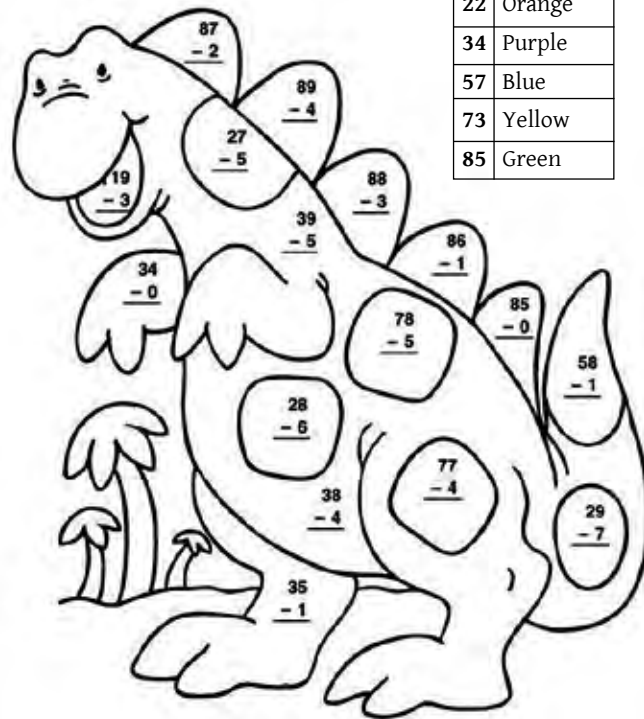
- Sharpens concentration.
- Improves problem solving skills.
- Improves decision making skills.

Available at shop.panther.lk www.panther.lk +94 777 441 144

**7 – 9 AGE GROUP**

Use the colour code and colour the picture.

Colour Code	
16	Red
22	Orange
34	Purple
57	Blue
73	Yellow
85	Green



- 7 – 9 years WINNERS!**
- ▶ Krishmi Fernando, Colombo 14
  - ▶ Mohamed Asjad, Matara
  - ▶ Rehan Ismail, Battaramulla
  - ▶ Yahya Ahmed, Colombo 6
  - ▶ Jerusha Ponrajah, Boralessgamuwa

Winners please call Funday Times on 2479333/2479337 and arrange to collect your prizes.

mailto: Or fundaytimes1@gmail.com

**Win super books from**



**Age:** 9 years and below

**Word Count:** 150

**Topic:** Sri Lanka's Independence Day

**Win:** Slime by David Walliams

Meet Ned – an extraordinary boy with a special power. Slime Power!

He may be the only one who can help the children of Mulch, alongside his new best friend...Slime!



**Age:** 10 – 12 years

**Word Count:** 150 – 200

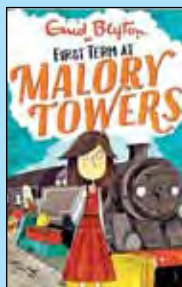
**Topic:** A national hero you admire

**Win:** First Term at Mallory Towers by Enid Blyton

Darrell Rivers is thrilled to start her first term at boarding school. She soon makes friends – and mischief!

Another new girl, Gwendoline, is beginning to get on everyone's nerves.

Will Darrell be able to keep her fiery temper under control?



**Age:** 13 – 15 years

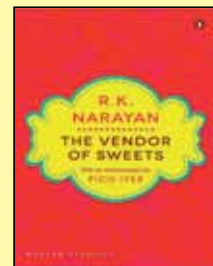
**Word Count:** 200 – 250

**Topic:** The importance of learning one's mother language

**Win:** The Vendor of Sweets by R. K. Narayan

Jagan, the vendor of sweets, finds himself confronted by his estranged son Mali, who has returned to Malgudi with Grace, his American wife, and a grand plan for selling story-writing machines.

What follows is a classic cross-generational battle between father and son.



**Write at the top of your Essay**

■ Book Competition ■ Essay Topic



**Read-a-Book and win a voucher from Vijitha Yapa Bookshop**

Read any book of your choice and write briefly about it.

What we want is not just a summary of the story but your views on the book.

The best account in the three age groups will be awarded book vouchers of Rs. 500 each from Vijitha Yapa Bookshop.

Three winners will be selected each month.

**Your account should not exceed 200 words.**

**Please indicate word count, fill in the coupon and attach it to your entry.**



Or

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**Read-a-Book Competition**

**Name :** .....

**Date of birth :** .....

**Address :** .....

**School:** .....

**Tel:** .....

**Finished book on :** .....

Hi Kids,

Please send in your Articles and Art for Kids' World, to be published in the Funday Times online edition and website.

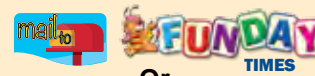


As you can see, we have space only once a month for Kids' World articles and art in the print edition.

Therefore, we are planning to carry them every week in the Funday Times online pages as well as on the Funday Times website.

We also invite schools to send in their students' work for a school page in the online edition and website.

Thanking you in anticipation of your positive response.



Or

[fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)

**FUNDAY TIMES 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

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**Young Reporters Coupon**

**Name:** .....

**Date of Birth:** .....

**Address:** .....

**Telephone:** .....

**School:** .....

**Parent's approval:** ..... **Date:** .....



From a *Funday Times Young Reporter*

## ***Wat Huay Pla Kang: The White Goddess Temple of Chiang Rai***

**W**at Huay Pla Kang in the Chiang Rai province is one of Thailand's most iconic and enchanting landmarks. Known for its towering white statue of the Goddess of Mercy, this temple is a blend of traditional Thai and modern Chinese architectural styles.

### **History and significance**

Wat Huay Pla Kang was established in the early 2000s and is dedicated to Guanyin, the Bodhisattva of Mercy in Mahayana Buddhism, who is revered for her compassion and ability to hear the cries of the suffering. The statue's nine-tiered crown represents the nine levels of enlightenment.

### **Visiting Wat Huay Pla Kang**

The White Goddess Temple is open daily to everyone and visitors are encouraged to dress modestly as a sign of respect. As you enter the White Goddess Temple, you will be greeted almost immediately by an easily accessible tram ride to the top.

When walking through the temple's garden, you will be able to see many interesting and eye-catching pieces of modern art. The staff members inside the temple are very friendly and kind and will tell you exactly where to go and which parts you should visit first.

You can reach the 25<sup>th</sup> floor of the temple by lift. There are also two more floors you can visit by taking separate internal staircases. Each of these floors are decorated with wall art of statues of Lord Buddha, trees and flowers. Everything is white in colour, with mirror and glass inserts which make the statues glint beautifully in the sunlight.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> floor, you can look through the eyes of the goddess! It feels very surreal as you can see the beautiful gardens that surround the temple.

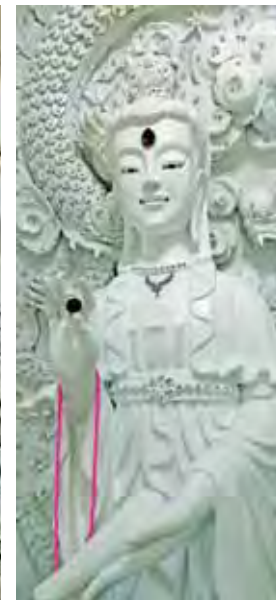
The outside of the temple is decorated with gigantic sparkly dragon statues along a steep stairway, leading up to the Guanyin statue. The dragons symbolize protection and wisdom. There is also a large white pagoda with a golden spire built in the garden.

The temple was the greatest – and I think I can safely say – one of the most memorable of places that I have been to and I really hope that I can visit it again soon!

Whether you are a devout Buddhist or a curious traveller, this sacred site is a definite must visit on your Thailand list!

**Suhanya Gamaarachchi  
(12 years)**

**Horizen College Int., Malabe**





# Five astronomical facts about the Royal Observatory Greenwich

February 6, 2025

*This year The Royal Observatory in Greenwich is 350 years old. The observatory, Britain's oldest scientific institution, was built in south-east London in 1675 to help improve navigation at sea for sailors by studying the stars and planets.*

*Today, it exists mainly as a museum where visitors come to learn about astronomy, how the observatory changed the way we measure time across the world and check out some very famous telescopes.*



## 1. The Royal Observatory created Greenwich Mean Time – or GMT



Up until the late 1800s there were lots of different ways to measure time in many different places, and that made things very confusing.

To fix this, the Royal Observatory decided to set a standard time that everyone could set clocks to.

This was called Greenwich Mean Time (GMT).

GMT became the only official time used in the UK, before British Summer Time (BST) was introduced to help farmers and factories make the most of daylight hours during War War Two.

## 2. The Royal Observatory is home to the Prime Meridian



**If you visit the line you you can actually stand with one foot in the Eastern Hemisphere and the other in the Western Hemisphere at the same time.**

The Prime Meridian (0° longitude) is an imaginary line that runs around the Earth.

It basically divides the Earth into two halves, the Eastern Hemisphere and the Western Hemisphere.

The line starts in Greenwich, London, at the Royal Observatory.

It is very important line because it is used across the world to define what time it is, and how far away places are from each other.

## 3. It's home to the Isaac Newton Telescope



**An astronomer uses the Isaac Newton Telescope.**

The Observatory is the home of one of the largest telescopes in the UK!

It is named after Sir Isaac Newton, who was a famous physicist and astronomer, known amongst other things as being the man who discovered gravity.

Today the telescope is used for research and public viewing events.

## 4. The Observatory is famous for its 'time ball'

Every day at 1:00pm at the Royal Observatory a large round ball, known as the 'time ball', drops.

The ball was first introduced in 1833, when it was used to help sailors who



**Visitors adjust their clocks at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, London, UK .**

were out at sea set their clocks.

The ball would rise to the top of a mast at the Observatory and then, right on time, drop to the bottom.

Sailors could see this from far away and it helped them make sure they were using the correct time for navigation.

## 5. The Observatory played a key role in navigation



**Star maps help sailors determine their location at sea.**

A long time ago it was very difficult for sailors to figure out where they were on the ocean.

Satellites and global positioning devices, that give precise location information, did not exist.

When the Royal Observatory was built it helped to solve this problem.

By using the telescopes at the observatory astronomers were able to produce accurate star maps that would help sailors determine their location at sea.

Source : CBBC Newsround



February 12

# News in Pictures



**New York, USA** ▲  
Monty, a Giant Schnauzer, poses for a photograph after winning the Best in Show during the 149<sup>th</sup> Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show at Madison Square Garden in New York City.



**Bekasi, Indonesia**  
A performer prepares traditional giant effigies called *ondel-ondel* during the Cap Go Meh Festival to mark the end of Lunar New Year celebrations. ◀



**Jinan, China**  
Spectators watch as robot dogs draped in lion costumes perform at the Lantern Festival, marking the end of the Lunar New Year. ▶



**Tainan, Taiwan**  
People wear protective gear as firecrackers explode during the Yanshui Beehive Fireworks Festival as part of the Lantern Festival celebrations. ◀

**Bhaktapur, Nepal**  
Devotees take a holy dip at the Hanumante River during the final day of the month-long Swasthani Brata Katha Festival. ▶



**Bulengo, Democratic Republic of the Congo** ▲  
A woman holds a child as people dismantle tents to salvage materials in a refugee camp after the M23 armed group ordered them to vacate the camp and go back to their villages and towns.

February 11



**Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia** ▲  
Hindus climb the 272 steps to the Batu Caves Temple to make offerings during the Thaipusam Festival.



**Seoul, South Korea** ▲  
High school seniors clad in traditional attire bow during a joint graduation and coming-of-age ceremony at Dongmyung Girls' High School.



**Mount Etna, Italy** ▲  
Lava flows from the Mount Etna volcano.

Sources: The Guardian & Reuters